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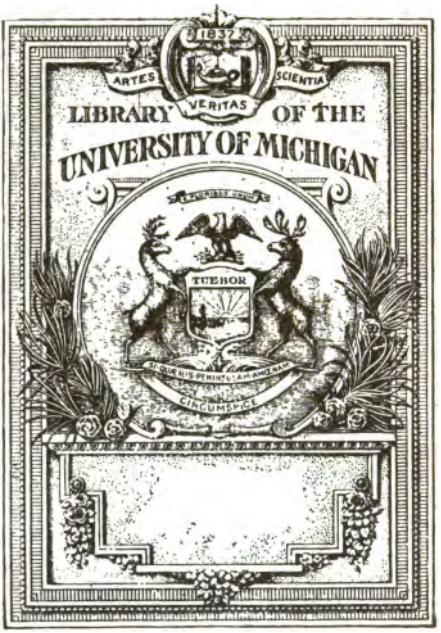

THE GIFT OF
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THE

MYSTERIES OF UDOLPHO,

A

ROMANCE;

INTERSPERSED WITH SOME PIECES OF POETRY.

BY

ANN RADCLIFFE,

AUTHOR OF THE ROMANCE OF THE FOREST, ETC.

THE THIRD EDITION.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

Fate sits on these dark battlements, and frowns,
And, as the portals open to receive me,
Her voice, in sullen echoes through the courts,
Tells of a nameless deed.

VOL. IV.

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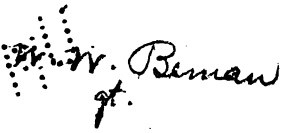
1795.



THE MYSTERIES OF UDOLPHO.

CHAP. I.

" Is all the council that we two have ſhared,
. . . . . the hours that we have ſpent,
When we have chid the haſty-footed time
For parting us——Oh! and is all forgot?
. . . . . .
And will you rent our ancient love aſunder?"

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

IN the evening, when Emily was at length informed, that Count de Villefort requeſted to ſee her, ſhe gueſſed that Valancourt was below, and, endeavouring to aſſume compoſure and to recollect all her ſpirits, ſhe roſe and left the apartment; but on reaching the door of the library, where ſhe imagined

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gined him to be, her emotion returned with ſuch energy, that, fearing to truſt herſelf in the room, ſhe returned into the hall, where ſhe continued for a conſiderable time, unable to command her agitated ſpirits.

When ſhe could recall them, ſhe found in the library Valancourt, ſeated with the Count, who both roſe on her entrance; but ſhe did not dare to look at Valancourt, and the Count, having led her to a chair, immediately withdrew.

Emily remained with her eyes fixed on the floor, under ſuch oppreſſion of heart, that ſhe could not ſpeak, and with difficulty breathed; while Valancourt threw himſelf into a chair beſide her, and, ſighing heavily, continued ſilent, when, had ſhe raiſed her eyes, ſhe would have perceived the violent emotion he ſuffered.

At length, in a tremulous voice, he ſaid, "I have ſolicited to ſee you this evening, that I might, at leaſt, be ſpared the further torture of ſuſpenſe, which your altered manner had occaſioned me, and which the hints

hints I have juſt received from the Count have in part explained. I perceive I have enemies, Emily, who envied me my late happineſs, and who have been buſy in ſearching out the means to deſtroy it: I perceive, too, that time and abſence have weakened the affection you once felt for me, and that you can now eaſily be taught to forget me."

His laſt words faltered, and Emily, leſs able to ſpeak than before, continued ſilent.

"O what a meeting is this!" exclaimed Valancourt, ſtarting from his ſeat, and pacing the room with hurried ſteps, "what a meeting is this, after our long—long ſeparation!" Again he ſat down, and, after the ſtruggle of a moment, he added in a firm but deſpairing tone, "This is too much—I cannot bear it! Emily, will you not ſpeak to me?"

He covered his face with his hand, as if to conceal his emotion, and took Emily's, which ſhe did not withdraw. Her tears could no longer be reſtrained; and, when

he looked up and perceived that ſhe was weeping, all his tenderneſs returned, and a gleam of hope appeared to croſs his mind, for he exclaimed, "O! you do pity me, then, you do love me! Yes, you are ſtill my own Emily——let me believe thoſe tears, that tell me ſo!"

Emily now made an effort to recover her firmneſs, and, haſtily drying them, "Yes," ſaid ſhe, "I do pity you—I weep for you—but, ought I to think of you with affection? You may remember that yeſter-evening, I ſaid, I had ſtill ſufficient confidence in your candour to believe, that, when I ſhould requeſt an explanation of your words, you would give it. This explanation is now unneceſſary, I underſtand them too well; but prove, at leaſt, that your candour is deſerving of the confidence I give it, when I aſk you, whether you are conſcious of being the ſame eſtimable Valancourt—whom I once loved."

"Once loved!" cried he,—"the ſame—the ſame!" He paused in extreme emotion, and

and then added, in a voice at once ſolemn, and dejected,—"No—I am not the ſame!—I am loſt—I am no longer worthy of you!"

He again concealed his face. Emily was too much affected by this honeſt confeſſion to reply immediately, and, while ſhe ſtruggled to overcome the pleadings of her heart, and to act with the deciſive firmneſs, which was neceſſary for her future peace, ſhe perceived all the danger of truſting long to her reſolution, in the preſence of Valancourt, and was anxious to conclude an interview, that tortured them both; yet when ſhe conſidered, that this was probably their laſt meeting, her fortitude ſunk at once, and ſhe experienced only emotions of tenderneſs and of deſpondency.

Valancourt, meanwhile, loſt in thoſe of remorſe and grief, which he had neither the power, or the will to expreſs, ſat inſenſible almoſt of the preſence of Emily, his features ſtill concealed, and his breaſt agitated by convulſive ſighs.

"Spare me the neceſſity," ſaid Emily, recollecting her fortitude, "ſpare me the neceſſity of mentioning thoſe circumſtances of your conduct, which oblige me to break our connection for ever. We muſt part, I now ſee you for the laſt time."

"Impoſſible!" cried Valancourt, rouſed from his deep ſilence, "You cannot mean what you ſay!—you cannot mean to throw me from you for ever!"

"We muſt part," repeated Emily, with emphaſis,—"and that for ever! Your own conduct has made this neceſſary."

"This is the Count's determination," ſaid he haughtily, "not yours, and I ſhall enquire by what authority he interferes between us." He now roſe, and walked about the room in great emotion.

"Let me ſave you from this error," ſaid Emily, not leſs agitated—"it is my determination, and, if you reflect a moment on your late conduct, you will perceive, that my future peace requires it."

"Your future peace requires, that we ſhould

ſhould part—part for ever!" ſaid Valancourt: "How little did I ever expect to hear you ſay ſo!"

"And how little did I expect, that it would be neceſſary for me to ſay ſo!" rejoined Emily, while her voice ſoftened into tenderneſs, and her tears flowed again.—"That you—you, Valancourt, would ever fall from my eſteem!"

He was ſilent a moment, as if overwhelmed by the conſciouſneſs of no longer deſerving this eſteem, as well as the certainty of having loſt it, and then, with impaſſioned grief, lamented the criminality of his late conduct and the miſery to which it had reduced him, till, overcome by a recollection of the paſt and a conviction of the future, he burſt into tears, and uttered only deep and broken ſighs.

The remorſe he had expreſſed, and the diſtreſs he ſuffered could not be witneſſed by Emily with indifference, and, had ſhe not called to her recollection all the circumſtances, of which Count de Villefort had

informed her, and all he had ſaid of the danger of confiding in repentance, formed under the influence of paſſion, ſhe might perhaps have truſted to the aſſurances of her heart, and have forgotten his miſconduct in the tenderneſs, which that repentance excited.

Valancourt, returning to the chair beſide her, at length, ſaid, in a ſubdued voice, "'Tis true, I am fallen—fallen from my own eſteem! but could you, Emily, ſo ſoon, ſo ſuddenly reſign, if you had not before ceaſed to love me, or, if your conduct was not governed by the deſigns, I will ſay, the ſelfiſh deſigns of another perſon? Would you not otherwiſe be willing to hope for my reformation—and could you bear, by eſtranging me from you, to abandon me to miſery—to myſelf!"—Emily wept aloud.—"No, Emily—no—you would not do this, if you ſtill loved me. You would find your own happineſs in ſaving mine."

"There are too many probabilities againſt that hope," ſaid Emily, "to juſtify me

me in truſting the comfort of my whole life to it. May I not alſo aſk, whether you could wiſh me to do this, if you really loved me?"

"Really loved you!" exclaimed Valancourt—"is it poſſible you can doubt my love? Yet it is reaſonable, that you ſhould do ſo, ſince you ſee, that I am leſs ready to ſuffer the horror of parting with you, than that of involving you in my ruin. Yes, Emily—I am ruined—irreparably ruined—I am involved in debts, which I can never diſcharge!" Valancourt's look, which was wild, as he ſpoke this, ſoon ſettled into an expreſſion of gloomy deſpair; and Emily, while ſhe was compelled to admire his ſincerity, ſaw, with unutterable anguiſh, new reaſons for fear in the ſuddenneſs of his feelings and the extent of the miſery, in which they might involve him. After ſome minutes, ſhe ſeemed to contend againſt her grief, and to ſtruggle for fortitude to conclude the interview. I will not prolong theſe moments," ſaid ſhe, "by a converſation,

which can anſwer no good purpoſe. Valancourt, farewell!"

"You are not going?" ſaid he wildly, interrupting her—"You will not leave me thus—you will not abandon me even before my mind has ſuggeſted any poſſibility of compromiſe between the laſt indulgence of my deſpair and the endurance of my loſs!" Emily was terrified by the ſternneſs of his look, and ſaid, in a ſoothing voice, "You have yourſelf acknowledged, that it is neceſſary we ſhould part;—if you wiſh, that I ſhould believe you love me, you will repeat the acknowledgment."—"Never—never," cried he—"I was diſtracted when I made it. O! Emily—this is too much;—though you are not deceived as to my faults, you muſt be deluded into this exaſperation againſt them. The Count is the barrier between us; but he ſhall not long remain ſo."

"You are, indeed, diſtracted," ſaid Emily, "the Count is not your enemy; on the contrary, he is my friend, and that might,

might, in ſome degree, induce you to conſider him as yours."—"Your friend!" ſaid Valancourt, haſtily, "how long has he been your friend, that he can ſo eaſily make you forget your lover? Was it he, who recommended to your favour the Monſieur Du Pont, who, you ſay, accompanied you from Italy, and who, I ſay, has ſtolen your affections? But I have no right to queſtion you;—you are your own miſtreſs. Du Pont, perhaps, may not long triumph over my fallen fortunes! Emily, more frightened than before by the frantic looks of Valancourt, ſaid, in a tone ſcarcely audible, "For heaven's ſake be reaſonable—be compoſed. Monſieur Du Pont is not your rival, nor is the Count his advocate. You have no rival; nor, except yourſelf, an enemy. My heart is wrung with anguiſh, which muſt increaſe while your frantic behaviour ſhews me, more than ever, that you are no longer the Valancourt I have been accuſtomed to love."

He made no reply, but ſat with his arms

reſted on the table and his face concealed by his hands; while Emily ſtood, ſilent and trembling, wretched for herſelf and dreading to leave him in this ſtate of mind.

"O exceſs of miſery!" he ſuddenly exclaimed, "that I can never lament my ſufferings, without accuſing myſelf, nor remember you, without recollecting the folly and the vice, by which I have loſt you! Why was I forced to Paris, and why did I yield to allurements, which were to make me deſpicable for ever! O! why cannot I look back, without interruption, to thoſe days of innocence and peace, the days of our early love!"—The recollection ſeemed to melt his heart, and the phrenſy of deſpair yielded to tears. After a long pauſe, turning towards her and taking her hand, he ſaid, in a ſoftened voice, "Emily, can you bear that we ſhould part—can you reſolve to give up an heart, that loves you like mine—an heart, which, though it has erred—widely erred—is not irretrievable from error, as you well know, it never can be

be retrievable from love?" Emily made no reply, but with her tears. "Can you," continued he, "can you forget all our former days of happineſs and confidence—when I had not a thought, that I might wiſh to conceal from you—when I had no taſte—no pleaſures, in which you did not participate?"

"O do not lead me to the remembrance of thoſe days," ſaid Emily, "unleſs you can teach me to be inſenſible to the preſent. I do not mean to reproach you; if I did, I ſhould be ſpared theſe tears; but why will you render your preſent ſufferings more conſpicuous, by contraſting them with your former virtues?"

"Thoſe virtues," ſaid Valancourt, "might, perhaps, again be mine, if your affection, which nurtured them, was unchanged;—but I fear, indeed, I ſee, that you can no longer love me; elſe the happy hours, which we have paſſed together, would plead for me, and you could not look back upon them unmoved. Yet, why ſhould I

torture

torture myſelf with the remembrance—why do I linger here? Am I not ruined—would it not be madneſs to involve you in my misfortunes, even if your heart was ſtill my own? I will not diſtreſs you further. Yet, before I go," added he, in a ſolemn voice, "let me repeat, that, whatever may be my deſtiny—whatever I may be doomed to ſuffer, I muſt always love you—moſt fondly love you! I am going, Emily, I am going to leave you—to leave you, for ever!" As he ſpoke the laſt words, his voice trembled, and he threw himſelf again into the chair, from which he had riſen. Emily was utterly unable to leave the room, or to ſay farewell. All impreſſion of his criminal conduct and almoſt of his follies was obliterated from her mind, and ſhe was ſenſible only of pity and grief.

"My fortitude is gone," ſaid Valancourt at length; "I can no longer even ſtruggle to recall it. I cannot now leave you—I cannot bid you an eternal farewell; ſay, at leaſt, that you will ſee me once again."

Emily's heart was somewhat relieved by the requeſt, and ſhe endeavoured to believe, that ſhe ought not to refuſe it. Yet ſhe was embarraſſed by recollecting, that ſhe was a viſitor in the houſe of the Count, who could not be pleaſed by the return of Valancourt. Other conſiderations, however, ſoon overcame this, and ſhe granted his requeſt, on the condition, that he would neither think of the Count, as his enemy, nor Du Pont as his rival. He then left her, with a heart, ſo much lightened by this ſhort reſpite, that he almoſt loſt every former ſenſe of misfortune.

Emily withdrew to her own room, that ſhe might compoſe her ſpirits and remove the traces of her tears, which would encourage the cenſorious remarks of the Counteſs and her favourite, as well as excite the curioſity of the reſt of the family. She found it, however, impoſſible to tranquillize her mind, from which ſhe could not expel the remembrance of the late ſcene with Valancourt, or the

the conſciouſneſs, that ſhe was to ſee him again, on the morrow. This meeting now appeared more terrible to her than the laſt, for the ingenuous confeſſion he had made of his ill conduct and his embarraſſed circumſtances, with the ſtrength and tenderneſs of affection, which this confeſſion diſcovered, had deeply impreſſed her, and, in ſpite of all ſhe had heard and believed to his diſadvantage, her eſteem began to return. It frequently appeared to her impoſſible, that he could have been guilty of the depravities reported of him, which, if not inconſiſtent with his warmth and impetuoſity, were entirely ſo with his candour and ſenſibility. Whatever was the criminality, which had given riſe to the reports, ſhe could not now believe them to be wholly true, nor that his heart was finally cloſed againſt the charms of virtue. The deep conſciouſneſs, which he felt as well as expreſſed of his errors, ſeemed to juſtify the opinion; and, as ſhe underſtood not the inſtability of youthful diſ-

poſitions, when oppoſed by habit, and that profeſſions frequently deceive thoſe, who make, as well as thoſe, who hear them, ſhe might have yielded to the flattering perſuaſions of her own heart and the pleadings of Valancourt, had ſhe not been guided by the ſuperior prudence of the Count. He repreſented to her, in a clear light, the danger of her preſent ſituation, that of liſtening to promiſes of amendment, made under the influence of ſtrong paſſion, and the ſlight hope, which could attach to a connection, whoſe chance of happineſs reſted upon the retrieval of ruined circumſtances and the reform of corrupted habits. On theſe accounts, he lamented, that Emily had conſented to a ſecond interview, for he ſaw how much it would ſhake her reſolution and increaſe the difficulty of her conqueſt.

Her mind was now ſo entirely occupied by nearer intereſts, that ſhe forgot the old houſekeeper and the promiſed hiſtory, which ſo lately had excited her curioſity, but which

Dorothée

Dorothée was probably not very anxious to diſcloſe, for night came; the hours paſſed; and ſhe did not appear in Emily's chamber. With the latter it was a ſleepleſs and diſmal night; the more ſhe ſuffered her memory to dwell on the late ſcene with Valancourt, the more her reſolution declined, and ſhe was obliged to recollect all the arguments, which the Count had made uſe of to ſtrengthen it, and all the precepts, which ſhe had received from her deceaſed father, on the ſubject of ſelf-command, to enable her to act, with prudence and dignity, on this the moſt ſevere occaſion of her life. There were moments, when all her fortitude forſook her, and when, remembering the confidence of former times, ſhe thought it impoſſible, that ſhe could renounce Valancourt. His reformation then appeared certain; the arguments of Count De Villefort were forgotten; ſhe readily believed all ſhe wiſhed, and was willing to encounter any evil, rather than that of an immediate ſeparation.

Thus

Thus paſſed the night in ineffectual ſtruggles between affection and reaſon, and ſhe roſe, in the morning, with a mind, weakened and irreſolute, and a frame, trembling with illneſs.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

"Come, weep with me;—paſt hope, paſt cure, paſt help!"

ROMEO AND JULIET.

VALANCOURT, meanwhile, ſuffered the tortures of remorſe and deſpair. The ſight of Emily had renewed all the ardour, with which he firſt loved her, and which had ſuffered a temporary abatement from abſence and the paſſing ſcenes of buſy life. When, on the receipt of her letter, he ſet out for Languedoc, he then knew, that his own folly had involved him in ruin, and it was no part of his deſign to conceal this from her. But he lamented only the delay which his ill-conduct muſt give to their marriage, and did not foreſee, that the information could induce her to break their connection for ever. While the proſpect of this ſeparation overwhelmed his mind, before ſtung with ſelf-reproach, he awaited their ſecond interview,

view, in a ſtate little ſhort of diſtraction, yet was ſtill inclined to hope, that his pleadings might prevail upon her not to exact it. In the morning, he ſent to know at what hour ſhe would ſee him; and his note arrived, when ſhe was with the Count, who had ſought an opportunity of again converſing with her of Valancourt; for he perceived the extreme diſtreſs of her mind, and feared, more than ever, that her fortitude would deſert her. Emily having diſmiſſed the meſſenger, the Count returned to the ſubject of their late converſation, urging his fear of Valancourt's entreaties, and again pointing out to her the lengthened miſery, that muſt enſue, if ſhe ſhould refuſe to encounter ſome preſent uneaſineſs. His repeated arguments could, indeed, alone have protected her from the affection ſhe ſtill felt for Valancourt, and ſhe reſolved to be governed by them.

The hour of interview, at length, arrived. Emily went to it, at leaſt, with compoſure of manner; but Valancourt was ſo much agitated,

agitated, that he could not ſpeak, for ſeveral minutes, and his firſt words were alternately thoſe of lamentation, entreaty and ſelf-reproach. Afterward, he ſaid, "Emily, I have loved you—I do love you better than my life; but I am ruined by my own conduct. Yet I would ſeek to entangle you in a connection, that muſt be miſerable for you, rather than ſubject myſelf to the puniſhment, which is my due, the loſs of you. I am a wretch, but I will be a villain no longer.—I will not endeavour to ſhake your reſolution by the pleadings of a ſelfiſh paſſion. I reſign you, Emily, and will endeavour to find conſolation in conſidering, that, though I am miſerable, you, at leaſt, may be happy. The merit of the ſacrifice, is, indeed, not my own, for I ſhould never have attained ſtrength of mind to ſurrender you, if your prudence had not demanded it."

He pauſed a moment, while Emily attempted to conceal the tears, which came to her eyes. She would have ſaid, "You ſpeak now, as you were wont to do," but

ſhe

ſhe checked herſelf.—" Forgive me, Emily," ſaid he, " all the ſufferings I have occaſioned you, and, ſometimes, when you think of the wretched Valancourt, remember, that his only conſolation would be to believe, that you are no longer unhappy by his folly." The tears now fell faſt upon her cheek, and he was relapſing into the phrenſy of deſpair, when Emily endeavoured to recall her fortitude and to terminate an interview, which only ſeemed to increaſe the diſtreſs of both. Perceiving her tears and that ſhe was riſing to go, Valancourt ſtruggled, once more, to overcome his own feelings and to ſooth hers. " The remembrance of this ſorrow," ſaid he, " ſhall in future be my protection. O! never again will example, or temptation have power to ſeduce me to evil, exalted as I ſhall be by the recollection of your grief for me."

Emily was ſomewhat comforted by this aſſurance. " We are now parting for ever," ſaid ſhe; " but, if my happineſs is dear to you, you will always remember, that nothing

thing can contribute to it more, than to believe, that you have recovered your own eſteem." Valancourt took her hand;—his eyes were covered with tears, and the farewell he would have ſpoken was loſt in ſighs. After a few moments, Emily ſaid, with difficulty and emotion, "Farewell, Valancourt, may you be happy!" She repeated her "farewell," and attempted to withdraw her hand, but he ſtill held it and bathed it with his tears. "Why prolong theſe moments?" ſaid Emily, in a voice ſcarcely audible, "they are too painful to us both." "This is too—too much," exclaimed Valancourt, reſigning her hand and throwing himſelf into a chair, where he covered his face with his hands and was overcome, for ſome moments, by convulſive ſighs. After a long pauſe, during which Emily wept in ſilence, and Valancourt ſeemed ſtruggling with his grief, ſhe again roſe to take leave of him. Then, endeavouring to recover his compoſure, "I am again afflicting you," ſaid he, "but let the anguiſh I ſuffer plead for me." He

then added, in a ſolemn voice, which frequently trembled with the agitation of his heart, "Farewell, Emily, you will always be the only object of my tenderneſs. Sometimes you will think of the unhappy Valancourt, and it will be with pity, though it may not be with eſteem. O! what is the whole world to me, without you—without your eſteem!" He checked himſelf—"I am falling again into the error I have juſt lamented. I muſt not intrude longer upon your patience, or I ſhall relapſe into deſpair."

He once more bade Emily adieu, preſſed her hand to his lips, looked at her, for the laſt time, and hurried out of the room.

Emily remained in the chair, where he had left her, oppreſſed with a pain at her heart, which ſcarcely permitted her to breathe, and liſtening to his departing ſteps, ſinking fainter and fainter, as he croſſed the hall. She was, at length, rouſed by the

voice of the Counteſs in the garden, and, her attention being then awakened, the firſt object, which ſtruck her ſight, was the vacant chair, where Valancourt had ſat. The tears, which had been, for ſome time, repreſſed by the kind of aſtoniſhment, that followed his departure, now came to her relief, and ſhe was, at length, ſufficiently compoſed to return to her own room.

CHAP. III.

" This is no mortal buſineſs, nor no ſound
That the earth owes!" . . . .

SHAKESPEARE.

WE now return to the mention of Montoni, whoſe rage and diſappointment were ſoon loſt in nearer intereſts, than any, which the unhappy Emily had awakened. His depredations having exceeded their uſual limits, and reached an extent, at which neither the timidity of the then commercial ſenate of Venice, nor their hope of his occaſional aſſiſtance would permit them to connive, the ſame effort, it was reſolved, ſhould complete the ſuppreſſion of his power and the correction of his outrages. While a corps of conſiderable ſtrength was upon the point of receiving orders to march for Udolpho, a young officer, prompted partly by reſent-

 ment,

ment, for ſome injury, received from Montoni, and partly by the hope of diſtinction, ſolicited an interview with the Miniſter, who directed the enterpriſe. To him he repreſented, that the ſituation of Udolpho rendered it too ſtrong to be taken by open force; except after ſome tedious operations; that Montoni had lately ſhewn how capable he was of adding to its ſtrength all the advantages, which could be derived from the ſkill of a commander; that ſo conſiderable a body of troops, as that allotted to the expedition, could not approach Udolpho without his knowledge, and that it was not for the honour of the republic to have a large part of its regular force employed, for ſuch a time as the ſiege of Udolpho would require, upon the attack of a handful of banditti. The object of the expedition, he thought, might be accompliſhed much more ſafely and ſpeedily by mingling contrivance with force. It was poſſible to meet Montoni and his party, without their walls, and to attack them then; or, by ap-

proaching the fortreſs, with the ſecrecy, conſiſtent with the march of ſmaller bodies of troops, to take advantage either of the treachery, or negligence of ſome of his party, and to ruſh unexpectedly upon the whole even in the caſtle of Udolpho.

This advice was ſeriouſly attended to, and the officer, who gave it, received the command of the troops, demanded for his purpoſe. His firſt efforts were accordingly thoſe of contrivance alone. In the neighbourhood of Udolpho, he waited till he had ſecured the aſſiſtance of ſeveral of the condottieri, of whom he found none, that he addreſſed, unwilling to puniſh their imperious maſter, and to ſecure their own pardon from the ſenate. He learned alſo the number of Montoni's troops, and that it had been much increaſed, ſince his late ſucceſſes. The concluſion of his plan was ſoon effected. Having returned with his party, who received the watch-word and other aſſiſtance from their friends within, Montoni and his officers were ſurpriſed by one diviſion, who had

been directed to their apartment, while the other maintained the ſlight combat, which preceded the ſurrender of the whole garriſon. Among the perſons, ſeized with Montoni, was Orſino, the aſſaſſin, who had joined him on his firſt arrival at Udolpho, and whoſe concealment had been made known to the ſenate by Count Morano, after the unſucceſsful attempt of the latter to carry off Emily. It was, indeed, partly for the purpoſe of capturing this man, by whom one of the ſenate had been murdered, that the expedition was undertaken, and its ſucceſs was ſo acceptable to them, that Morano was inſtantly releaſed, notwithſtanding the political ſuſpicions, which Montoni, by his ſecret accuſation, had excited againſt him. The celerity and eaſe, with which this whole tranſaction was completed, prevented it from attracting curioſity, or even from obtaining a place in any of the publiſhed records of that time; ſo that Emily, who remained in Languedoc, was ignorant of the defeat and ſignal humiliation of her late perſecutor.

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Her mind was now occupied with ſufferings, which no effort of reaſon had yet been able to controul. Count de Villefort, who ſincerely attempted whatever benevolence could ſuggeſt for ſoftening them, ſometimes allowed her the ſolitude ſhe wiſhed for, ſometimes led her into friendly parties, and conſtantly protected her, as much as poſſible, from the ſhrewd enquiries and critical converſation of the Counteſs. He often invited her to make excurſions, with him and his daughter, during which he converſed entirely on queſtions, ſuitable to her taſte, without appearing to conſult it, and thus endeavoured gradually to withdraw her from the ſubject of her grief, and to awake other intereſts in her mind. Emily, to whom he appeared as the enlightened friend and protector of her youth, ſoon felt for him the tender affection of a daughter, and her heart expanded to her young friend Blanche, as to a ſiſter, whoſe kindneſs and ſimplicity compenſated for the want of more brilliant qualities. It was long before ſhe could ſuf-

ficiently abſtract her mind from Valancourt to liſten to the ſtory, promiſed by old Dorothée, concerning which her curioſity had once been ſo deeply intereſted; but Dorothée, at length, reminded her of it, and Emily deſired, that ſhe would come, that night, to her chamber.

Still her thoughts were employed by conſiderations, which weakened her curioſity, and Dorothée's tap at the door, ſoon after twelve, ſurpriſed her almoſt as much as if it had not been appointed. "I am come, at laſt, lady," ſaid ſhe; "I wonder what it is makes my old limbs ſhake ſo, to-night. I thought, once or twice, I ſhould have dropped, as I was a-coming." Emily ſeated her in a chair, and deſired, that ſhe would compoſe her ſpirits, before ſhe entered upon the ſubject, that had brought her thither. "Alas," ſaid Dorothée, "it is thinking of that, I believe, which has diſturbed me ſo. In my way hither too, I paſſed the chamber, where my dear lady died, and every thing was ſo ſtill and gloomy about

about me, that I almoſt fancied I ſaw her as ſhe appeared upon her death-bed."

Emily now drew her chair near to Dorothée, who went on. "It is about twenty years ſince my lady Marchioneſs came a bride to the chateau. O! I well remember how ſhe looked, when ſhe came into the great hall, where we ſervants were all aſſembled to welcome her, and how happy my lord the Marquis ſeemed. Ah! who would have thought then!—But, as I was ſaying, ma'amſelle, I thought the Marchioneſs, with all her ſweet looks, did not look happy at heart, and ſo I told my huſband, and he ſaid it was all fancy; ſo I ſaid no more, but I made my remarks, for all that. My lady Marchioneſs was then about your age, and, as I have often thought, very like you. Well! my lord the Marquis kept open houſe, for a long time, and gave ſuch entertainments and there were ſuch gay doings as have never been in the chateau ſince. I was younger, ma'amſelle, then, than I am now, and was as gay as the beſt of

them. I remember I danced with Philip, the butler, in a pink gown, with yellow ribbons, and a coif, not ſuch as they wear now, but plaited high, with ribbons all about it. It was very becoming truly;—my lord, the Marquis, noticed me. Ah! he was a good-natured gentleman then—who would have thought that he——"

"But the Marchioneſs, Dorothée," ſaid Emily, "you was telling me of her."

"O yes, my lady Marchioneſs, I thought ſhe did not ſeem happy at heart, and once, ſoon after the marriage, I caught her crying in her chamber; but, when ſhe ſaw me, ſhe dried her eyes, and pretended to ſmile. I did not dare then to aſk what was the matter; but, the next time I ſaw her crying, I did, and ſhe ſeemed diſpleaſed;—ſo I ſaid no more. I found out, ſome time after, how it was. Her father, it ſeems, had commanded her to marry my lord, the Marquis, for his money, and there was another nobleman, or elſe a chevalier, that ſhe liked better and that was very fond of her, and ſhe fretted

for

for the loſs of him, I fancy, but ſhe never told me ſo. My lady always tried to conceal her tears from the Marquis, for I have often ſeen her, after ſhe has been ſo ſorrowful, look ſo calm and ſweet, when he came into the room! But my lord, all of a ſudden, grew gloomy and fretful, and very unkind ſometimes to my lady. This afflicted her very much, as I ſaw, for ſhe never complained, and ſhe uſed to try ſo ſweetly to oblige him and to bring him into a good humour, that my heart has often ached to ſee it. But he uſed to be ſtubborn, and give her harſh anſwers, and then, when ſhe found it all in vain, ſhe would go to her own room, and cry ſo! I uſed to hear her in the anti-room, poor dear lady! but I ſeldom ventured to go to her. I uſed, ſometimes, to think my lord was jealous. To be ſure my lady was greatly admired, but ſhe was too good to deſerve ſuſpicion. Among the many chevaliers, that viſited at the chateau, there was one, that I always thought ſeemed juſt ſuited for my lady; he was ſo courteous, yet

ſo ſpirited, and there was ſuch a grace, as it were, in all he did, or ſaid. I always obſerved, that, whenever he had been there, the Marquis was more gloomy and my lady more thoughtful, and it came into my head, that this was the chevalier ſhe ought to have married, but I never could learn for certain."

"What was the chevalier's name, Dorothée?" ſaid Emily.

"Why that I will not tell even to you, ma'amſelle, for evil may come of it. I once heard from a perſon, who is ſince dead, that the Marchioneſs was not in law the wife of the Marquis, for that ſhe had before been privately married to the gentleman ſhe was ſo much attached to, and was afterwards afraid to own it to her father, who was a very ſtern man; but this ſeems very unlikely, and I never gave much faith to it. As I was ſaying, the Marquis was moſt out of humour, as I thought, when the chevalier I ſpoke of had been at the chateau, and, at laſt, his ill treatment of my lady made her quite

quite miſerable. He would ſee hardly any viſitors at the caſtle, and made her live almoſt by herſelf. I was her conſtant attendant, and ſaw all ſhe ſuffered, but ſtill ſhe never complained.

"After matters had gone on thus, for near a year, my lady was taken ill, and I thought her long fretting had made her ſo,—but, alas! I fear it was worſe than that."

"Worſe! Dorothée," ſaid Emily, "can that be poſſible?"

"I fear it was ſo, madam, there were ſtrange appearances! But I will only tell what happened. My lord, the Marquis—"

"Huſh, Dorothée, what ſounds were thoſe?" ſaid Emily.

Dorothée changed countenance, and, while they both liſtened, they heard, on the ſtillneſs of the night, muſic of uncommon ſweetneſs.

"I have ſurely heard that voice before!" ſaid Emily, at length.

"I have often heard it, and at this ſame hour," ſaid Dorothée, ſolemnly, "and, if ſpi-

rits

rits ever bring muſic—that is ſurely the muſic of one!"

Emily, as the ſounds drew nearer, knew them to be the ſame ſhe had formerly heard at the time of her father's death; and, whether it was the remembrance they now revived of that melancholy event, or that ſhe was ſtruck with ſuperſtitious awe, it is certain ſhe was ſo much affected, that ſhe had nearly fainted.

"I think I once told you, madam," ſaid Dorothée, "that I firſt heard this muſic ſoon after my lady's death! I well remember the night!"——

"Hark! it comes again!" ſaid Emily, "let us open the window, and liſten."

They did ſo; but, ſoon, the ſounds floated gradually away into diſtance, and all was again ſtill; they ſeemed to have ſunk among the woods, whoſe tufted tops were viſible upon the clear horizon, while every other feature of the ſcene was involved in the night-ſhade, which, however, allowed

the

the eye an indiſtinct view of ſome objects in the garden below.

As Emily leaned on the window, gazing with a kind of thrilling awe upon the obſcurity beneath, and then upon the cloudleſs arch above, enlightened only by the ſtars, Dorothée, in a low voice, reſumed her narrative.

"I was ſaying, ma'amſelle, that I well remember when firſt I heard that muſic. It was one night, ſoon after my lady's death, that I had ſat up later than uſual, and I don't know how it was, but I had been thinking a great deal about my poor miſtreſs, and of the ſad ſcene I had lately witneſſed. The chateau was quite ſtill, and I was in a chamber at a good diſtance from the reſt of the ſervants, and this, with the mournful things I had been thinking of, I ſuppoſe, made me low ſpirited, for I felt very lonely and forlorn, as it were, and liſtened often, wiſhing to hear a ſound in the chateau, for you know, ma'amſelle, when one can hear people moving, one does not

ſo much mind, about one's fears. But all the ſervants were gone to bed, and I ſat, thinking and thinking, till I was almoſt afraid to look round the room, and my poor lady's countenance often came to my mind, ſuch as I had ſeen her when ſhe was dying, and, once or twice, I almoſt thought I ſaw her before me,—when ſuddenly I heard ſuch ſweet muſic! It ſeemed juſt at my window, and I ſhall never forget what I felt. I had not power to move from my chair, but then, when I thought it was my dear lady's voice, the tears came to my eyes. I had often heard her ſing in her life-time, and to be ſure ſhe had a very fine voice; it had made me cry to hear her, many a time, when ſhe has ſat in her oriel, of an evening, playing upon her lute ſuch ſad ſongs, and ſinging ſo. O! it went to one's heart! I have liſtened in the anti-chamber, for the hour together, and ſhe would ſometimes ſit playing, with the window open, when it was ſummer time, till it was quite dark, and when I have gone in,

in, to ſhut it, ſhe has hardly ſeemed to know what hour it was. But, as I ſaid, madam," continued Dorothée, " when firſt I heard the muſic, that came juſt now, I thought it was my late lady's, and I have often thought ſo again, when I have heard it, as I have done at intervals, ever ſince. Sometimes, many months have gone by, but ſtill it has returned."

" It is extraordinary," obſerved Emily, " that no perſon has yet diſcovered the muſician."

" Aye, ma'amſelle, if it had been any thing earthly it would have been diſcovered long ago, but who could have courage to follow a ſpirit, and if they had, what good could it do?—for ſpirits, *you know*, ma'am, can take any ſhape, or no ſhape, and they will be here, one minute, and, the next perhaps, in a quite different place!"

" Pray reſume your ſtory of the Marchioneſs," ſaid Emily, " and acquaint me with the manner of her death."

" I will, ma'am," ſaid Dorothée, " but ſhall we leave the window?"

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"This cool air refreſhes me," replied Emily, "and I love to hear it creep along the woods, and to look upon this duſky landſcape. You was ſpeaking of my lord, the Marquis, when the muſic interrupted us."

"Yes, madam, my lord, the Marquis, became more and more gloomy; and my lady grew worſe and worſe, till, one night, ſhe was taken very ill, indeed. I was called up, and, when I came to her bed ſide, I was ſhocked to ſee her countenance—it was ſo changed! She looked piteouſly up at me, and deſired I would call the Marquis again, for he was not yet come, and tell him ſhe had ſomething particular to ſay to him. At laſt, he came, and he did, to be ſure, ſeem very ſorry to ſee her, but he ſaid very little. My lady told him ſhe felt herſelf to be dying, and wiſhed to ſpeak with him alone, and then I left the room, but I ſhall never forget his look as I went."

When I returned, I ventured to remind my lord about ſending for a doctor, for I ſuppoſed he had forgot to do ſo, in his grief;

grief; but my lady ſaid it was then too late; but my lord, ſo far from thinking ſo, ſeemed to think lightly of her diſorder—till ſhe was ſeized with ſuch terrible pains! O, I never ſhall forget her ſhriek! My lord then ſent off a man and horſe for the doctor, and walked about the room and all over the chateau, in the greateſt diſtreſs; and I ſtaid by my dear lady, and did what I could to eaſe her ſufferings. She had intervals of eaſe, and in one of theſe ſhe ſent for my lord again; when he came, I was going, but ſhe deſired I would not leave her. O! I ſhall never forget what a ſcene paſſed—I can hardly bear to think of it now! My lord was almoſt diſtracted, for my lady behaved with ſo much goodneſs, and took ſuch pains to comfort him, that, if he ever had ſuffered a ſuſpicion to enter his head, he muſt now have been convinced he was wrong. And to be ſure he did ſeem to be overwhelmed with the thought of his treatment of her, and this affected her ſo much, that ſhe fainted away.

"We then got my lord out of the room; he went into his library, and threw himſelf on the floor, and there he ſtaid, and would hear no reaſon, that was talked to him. When my lady recovered, ſhe enquired for him, but, afterwards, ſaid ſhe could not bear to ſee his grief, and deſired we would let her die quietly. She died in my arms, ma'amſelle, and ſhe went off as peacefully as a child, for all the violence of her diſorder was paſſed."

Dorothée pauſed, and wept, and Emily wept with her; for ſhe was much affected by the goodneſs of the late Marchioneſs, and by the meek patience, with which ſhe had ſuffered.

"When the doctor came," reſumed Dorothée, "alas! he came too late; he appeared greatly ſhocked to ſee her, for ſoon after her death a frightful blackneſs ſpread all over her face. When he had ſent the attendants out of the room, he aſked me ſeveral odd queſtions about the Marchioneſs, particularly concerning the manner, in which ſhe had been ſeized, and he often

ſhook

ſhook his head at my anſwers, and ſeemed to mean more, than he choſe to ſay. But I underſtood him too well. However, I kept my remarks to myſelf, and only told them to my huſband, who bade me hold my tongue. Some of the other ſervants, however, ſuſpected what I did, and ſtrange reports were whiſpered about the neighbourhood, but nobody dared to make any ſtir about them. When my lord heard that my lady was dead, he ſhut himſelf up, and would ſee nobody but the doctor, who uſed to be with him alone, ſometimes for an hour together; and, after that, the doctor never talked with me again about my lady. When ſhe was buried in the church of the convent, at a little diſtance yonder (if the moon was up you might ſee the towers here, ma'amſelle), all my lord's vaſſals followed the funeral, and there was not a dry eye among them, for ſhe had done a deal of good among the poor. My lord, the Marquis, I never ſaw any body ſo melancholy as he was afterwards, and ſometimes

he

he would be in ſuch fits of violence, that we almoſt thought he had loſt his ſenſes. He did not ſtay long at the chateau, but joined his regiment, and, ſoon after, all the ſervants, except my huſband and I, received notice to go, for my lord went to the wars. I never ſaw him after, for he would not return to the chateau, though it is ſuch a fine place, and never finiſhed thoſe fine rooms he was building on the weſt ſide of it, and it has, in a manner, been ſhut up ever ſince, till my lord the Count came here."

"The death of the Marchioneſs appears extraordinary," ſaid Emily, who was anxious to know more than ſhe dared to aſk.

"Yes, madam," replied Dorothée, "it was extraordinary; I have told you all I ſaw, and you may eaſily gueſs what I think. I cannot ſay more, becauſe I would not ſpread reports, that might offend my lord the Count."

"You are very right," ſaid Emily;—"where did the Marquis die?"—"In the north of France, I believe, ma'amſelle," replied

plied Dorothée. " I was very glad, when I heard my lord the Count was coming, for this had been a ſad deſolate place, theſe many years, and we heard ſuch ſtrange noiſes, ſometimes, after my lady's death, that, as I told you before, my huſband and I left it for a neighbouring cottage. And now, lady, I have told you all this ſad hiſtory, and all my thoughts, and you have promiſed, you know, never to give the leaſt hint about it."—" I have," ſaid Emily, " and I will be faithful to my promiſe, Dorothée;—what you have told has intereſted me more than you can imagine. I only wiſh I could prevail upon you to tell the name of the chevalier, whom you thought ſo deſerving of the Marchioneſs."

Dorothée, however, ſteadily refuſed to do this, and then returned to the notice of Emily's likeneſs to the late Marchioneſs. " There is another picture of her," added ſhe, " hanging in a room of the ſuite which was ſhut up. It was drawn, as I have heard, before ſhe was married, and is much more

more like you than the miniature." When Emily expreſſed a ſtrong deſire to ſee this, Dorothée replied, that ſhe did not wiſh to open thoſe rooms; but Emily reminded her, that the Count had talked the other day of ordering them to be opened; of which Dorothée ſeemed to conſider much, and then ſhe owned, that ſhe ſhould feel leſs, if ſhe went into them with Emily firſt, than otherwiſe, and at length promiſed to ſhew the picture.

The night was too far advanced and Emily was too much affected by the narrative of the ſcenes, which had paſſed in thoſe apartments, to deſire to viſit them at this hour; but ſhe requeſted that Dorothée would return on the following night, when they were not likely to be obſerved, and conduct her thither. Beſides her wiſh to examine the portrait, ſhe felt a thrilling curioſity to ſee the chamber, in which the Marchioneſs had died, and which Dorothée had ſaid remained, with the bed and furniture, juſt as when the corpſe was removed

removed for interment. The ſolemn emotions, which the expectation of viewing ſuch a ſcene had awakened, were in uniſon with the preſent tone of her mind, depreſſed by ſevere diſappointment. Cheerful objects rather added to, than removed this depreſſion; but, perhaps, ſhe yielded too much to her melancholy inclination, and imprudently lamented the misfortune, which no virtue of her own could have taught her to avoid, though no effort of reaſon could make her look unmoved upon the ſelf-degradation of him, whom ſhe had once eſteemed and loved.

Dorothée promiſed to return, on the following night, with the keys of the chambers, and then wiſhed Emily good repoſe, and departed. Emily, however, continued at the window, muſing upon the melancholy fate of the Marchioneſs and liſtening, in awful expectation, for a return of the muſic. But the ſtillneſs of the night remained long unbroken, except by the murmuring ſounds of the woods, as they waved

in the breeze, and then by the distant bell of the convent, striking one. She now withdrew from the window, and, as she sat at her bed-side, indulging melancholy reveries, which the loneliness of the hour assisted, the stillness was suddenly interrupted, not by music, but by very uncommon sounds, that seemed to come either from the room adjoining her own, or from one below. The terrible catastrophe, that had been related to her, together with the mysterious circumstances, said to have since occurred in the chateau, had so much shocked her spirits, that she now sunk, for a moment, under the weakness of superstition. The sounds, however, did not return, and she retired, to forget in sleep the disastrous story she had heard.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

"Now it is the time of night,
That, the graves all gaping wide,
Every one lets forth his ſprite,
In the church-way path to glide."

SHAKESPEARE.

ON the next night, about the ſame hour as before, Dorothée came to Emily's chamber, with the keys of that ſuite of rooms, which had been particularly appropriated to the late Marchioneſs. Theſe extended along the north ſide of the chateau, forming part of the old building; and, as Emily's room was in the ſouth, they had to paſs over a great extent of the caſtle, and by the chambers of ſeveral of the family, whoſe obſervations Dorothée was anxious to avoid, ſince it might excite enquiry and raiſe reports, ſuch as would diſpleaſe the Count. She, therefore, requeſted that Emily would wait half an hour, before they ventured

forth, that they might be certain all the ſervants were gone to bed. It was nearly one, before the chateau was perfectly ſtill, or Dorothée thought it prudent to leave the chamber. In this interval, her ſpirits ſeemed to be greatly affected by the remembrance of paſt events, and by the proſpect of entering again upon places, where theſe had occurred, and in which ſhe had not been for ſo many years. Emily too was affected, but her feelings had more of ſolemnity, and leſs of fear. From the ſilence, into which reflection and expectation had thrown them, they, at length, rouſed themſelves, and left the chamber. Dorothée, at firſt, carried the lamp, but her hand trembled ſo much with infirmity and alarm, that Emily took it from her, and offered her arm, to ſupport her feeble ſteps.

They had to deſcend the great ſtair-caſe, and, after paſſing over a wide extent of the chateau, to aſcend another, which led to the ſuite of rooms they were in queſt of. They ſtepped cautiouſly along the open corridor, that

that ran round the great hall, and into which the chambers of the Count, Counteſs, and the Lady Blanche, opened, and, from thence, deſcending the chief ſtair-caſe, they croſſed the hall itſelf. Proceeding through the ſervants-hall, where the dying embers of a wood fire ſtill glimmered on the hearth, and the ſupper table was ſurrounded by chairs, that obſtructed their paſſage, they came to the foot of the back ſtair-caſe. Old Dorothée here pauſed, and looked around: "Let us liſten," ſaid ſhe, "if any thing is ſtirring; Ma'amſelle, do you hear any voice?" "None," ſaid Emily, "there certainly is no perſon up in the chateau, beſides ourſelves."—"No, ma'amſelle," ſaid Dorothée, "but I have never been here at this hour before, and, after what I know, my fears are not wonderful."—"What do you know?" ſaid Emily.—"O ma'amſelle, we have no time for talking now; let us go on. That door on the left is the one we muſt open."

They proceeded, and, having reached the

top of the ſtair-caſe, Dorothée applied the key to the lock. "Ah," ſaid ſhe, as ſhe endeavoured to turn it, "ſo many years have paſſed ſince this was opened, that I fear it will not move." Emily was more ſucceſsful, and they preſently entered a ſpacious and ancient chamber.

"Alas!" exclaimed Dorothée, as ſhe entered, "the laſt time I paſſed through this door—I followed my poor lady's corpſe!"

Emily, ſtruck with the circumſtance, and affected by the duſky and ſolemn air of the apartment, remained ſilent, and they paſſed on through a long ſuite of rooms, till they came to one more ſpacious than the reſt, and rich in the remains of faded magnificence.

"Let us reſt here awhile, madam," ſaid Dorothée faintly, "we are going into the chamber, where my lady died! that door opens into it. Ah, ma'amſelle! why did you perſuade me to come?"

Emily drew one of the maſſy arm-chairs, with which the apartment was furniſhed, and

and begged Dorothée would ſit down, and try to compoſe her ſpirits.

"How the ſight of this place brings all that paſſed formerly to my mind!" ſaid Dorothée; "it ſeems as if it was but yeſterday ſince all that ſad affair happened!"

"Hark! what noiſe is that?" ſaid Emily.

Dorothée, half ſtarting from her chair, looked round the apartment, and they liſtened—but, every thing remaining ſtill, the old woman ſpoke again upon the ſubject of her ſorrow. "This ſaloon, ma'amſelle, was in my lady's time the fineſt apartment in the chateau, and it was fitted up according to her own taſte. All this grand furniture, but you can now hardly ſee what it is for the duſt, and our light is none of the beſt—ah! how I have ſeen this room lighted up in my lady's time!—all this grand furniture came from Paris, and was made after the faſhion of ſome in the Louvre there, except thoſe large glaſſes, and they came from ſome outlandiſh place, and that rich tapeſ-

try. How the colours are faded already! —ſince I ſaw it laſt!"

"I underſtood, that was twenty years ago," obſerved Emily.

"Thereabout, madam," ſaid Dorothée, "and well remembered, but all the time between then and now ſeems as nothing. That tapeſtry uſed to be greatly admired at, it tells the ſtories out of ſome famous book, or other, but I have forgot the name."

Emily now roſe to examine the figures it exhibited, and diſcovered, by verſes in the Provençal tongue, wrought underneath each ſcene, that it exhibited ſtories from ſome of the moſt celebrated ancient romances.

Dorothée's ſpirits being now more compoſed, ſhe roſe, and unlocked the door that led into the late Marchioneſs's apartment, and Emily paſſed into a lofty chamber, hung round with dark arras, and ſo ſpacious, that the lamp ſhe held up did not ſhew its extent; while Dorothée, when ſhe entered, had dropped into a chair, where, ſighing deeply, ſhe ſcarcely truſted herſelf with the view of a ſcene ſo affecting to her.

It

It was ſome time before Emily perceived, through the duſk, the bed on which the Marchioneſs was ſaid to have died; when, advancing to the upper end of the room, ſhe diſcovered the high canopied teſter of dark green damaſk, with the curtains deſcending to the floor in the faſhion of a tent, half-drawn, and remaining apparently as they had been left twenty years before; and over the whole bedding was thrown a counterpane, or pall, of black velvet, that hung down to the floor. Emily ſhuddered, as ſhe held the lamp over it, and looked within the dark curtains, where ſhe almoſt expected to have ſeen a human face, and, ſuddenly remembering the horror ſhe had ſuffered upon diſcovering the dying Madame Montoni in the turret chamber of Udolpho, her ſpirits fainted, and ſhe was turning from the bed, when Dorothée, who had now reached it, exclaimed, "Holy Virgin! methinks I ſee my lady ſtretched upon that pall —as when laſt I ſaw her!"

Emily, ſhocked by this exclamation,

looked involuntarily again within the curtains, but the blackneſs of the pall only appeared; while Dorothée was compelled to ſupport herſelf upon the ſide of the bed, and preſently tears brought her ſome relief.

"Ah!" ſaid ſhe, after ſhe had wept awhile, "it was here I ſat on that terrible night, and held my lady's hand, and heard her laſt words, and ſaw all her ſufferings—*here* ſhe died in my arms!"

"Do not indulge theſe painful recollections," ſaid Emily, "let us go. Shew me the picture you mentioned, if it will not too much affect you."

"It hangs in the oriel," ſaid Dorothée riſing, and going towards a ſmall door near the bed's head, which ſhe opened, and Emily followed with the light, into the cloſet of the late Marchioneſs.

"Alas! there ſhe is, ma'amſelle," ſaid Dorothée, pointing to a portrait of a lady, "there is her very ſelf! juſt as ſhe looked when ſhe came firſt to the chateau. You

ſee,

ſee, madam, ſhe was all blooming like you, then—and ſo ſoon to be cut off!"

While Dorothée ſpoke, Emily was attentively examining the picture, which bore a ſtrong reſemblance to the miniature, though the expreſſion of the countenance in each was ſomewhat different; but ſtill ſhe thought ſhe perceived ſomething of that penſive melancholy in the portrait, which ſo ſtrongly characteriſed the miniature.

"Pray, ma'amſelle, ſtand beſide the picture, that I may look at you together," ſaid Dorothée, who, when the requeſt was complied with, exclaimed again at the reſemblance. Emily alſo, as ſhe gazed upon it, thought that ſhe had ſomewhere ſeen a perſon very like it, though ſhe could not now recollect who this was.

In this cloſet were many memorials of the departed Marchioneſs; a robe and ſeveral articles of her dreſs were ſcattered upon the chairs, as if they had juſt been thrown off. On the floor, were a pair of

black ſattin ſlippers, and, on the dreſſing-table, a pair of gloves and a long black veil, which, as Emily took it up to examine, ſhe perceived was dropping to pieces with age.

" Ah!" ſaid Dorothée, obſerving the veil, " my lady's hand laid it there; it has never been moved ſince!"

Emily, ſhuddering, immediately laid it down again. " I well remember ſeeing her take it off," continued Dorothée, " it was on the night before her death, when ſhe had returned from a little walk I had perſuaded her to take in the gardens, and ſhe ſeemed refreſhed by it. I told her how much better ſhe looked, and I remember what a languid ſmile ſhe gave me; but, alas! ſhe little thought, or I either, that ſhe was to die, that night."

Dorothée wept again, and then, taking up the veil, threw it ſuddenly over Emily, who ſhuddered to find it wrapped round her, deſcending even to her feet, and, as ſhe endeavoured to throw it off, Dorothée entreated

treated that she would keep it on for one moment. "I thought," added she, "how like you would look to my dear mistress in that veil;—may your life, ma'amselle, be a happier one than hers!"

Emily, having disengaged herself from the veil, laid it again on the dressing-table, and surveyed the closet, where every object, on which her eye fixed, seemed to speak of the Marchioness. In a large oriel window of painted glass, stood a table, with a silver crucifix, and a prayer-book open; and Emily remembered with emotion what Dorothée had mentioned concerning her custom of playing on her lute in this window, before she observed the lute itself, lying on a corner of the table, as if it had been carelessly placed there by the hand, that had so often awakened it.

"This is a sad forlorn place!" said Dorothée, "for, when my dear lady died, I had no heart to put it to rights, or the chamber either; and my lord never came into the rooms after, so they remain just as they did

did when my lady was removed for interment."

While Dorothée ſpoke, Emily was ſtill looking on the lute, which was a Spaniſh one, and remarkably large; and then, with a hefitating hand, ſhe took it up, and paſſed her fingers over the chords. They were out of tune, but uttered a deep and full ſound. Dorothée ſtarted at their well-known tones, and, ſeeing the lute in Emily's hand, ſaid, "This is the lute my lady Marchioneſs loved ſo! I remember when laſt ſhe played upon it—it was on the night that ſhe died. I came as uſual to undreſs her, and, as I entered the bed-chamber, I heard the ſound of muſic from the oriel, and perceiving it was my lady's, who was ſitting there, I ſtepped ſoftly to the door, which ſtood a little open, to liſten; for the muſic—though it was mournful—was ſo ſweet! There I ſaw her, with the lute in her hand, looking upwards, and the tears fell upon her cheeks, while ſhe ſung a veſper hymn, ſo ſoft, and ſo ſolemn! and her voice trem-

trembled, as it were, and then she would stop for a moment, and wipe away her tears, and go on again, lower than before. O! I had often listened to my lady, but never heard any thing so sweet as this; it made me cry, almost, to hear it. She had been at prayers, I fancy, for there was the book open on the table beside her—aye, and there it lies open still! Pray, let us leave the oriel, ma'amselle," added Dorothée, "this is a heart-breaking place!"

Having returned into the chamber, she desired to look once more upon the bed, when, as they came opposite to the open door, leading into the saloon, Emily, in the partial gleam, which the lamp threw into it, thought she saw something glide along into the obscurer part of the room. Her spirits had been much affected by the surrounding scene, or it is probable this circumstance, whether real or imaginary, would not have affected her in the degree it did; but she endeavoured to conceal her emotion from Dorothée, who, however, observ-

ing

ing her countenance change, enquired if she was ill.

"Let us go," said Emily, faintly, "the air of these rooms is unwholesome;" but, when she attempted to do so, considering that she must pass through the apartment where the phantom of her terror had appeared, this terror increased, and, too faint to support herself, she sat down on the side of the bed.

Dorothée, believing that she was only affected by a consideration of the melancholy catastrophe, which had happened on this spot, endeavoured to cheer her; and then, as they sat together on the bed, she began to relate other particulars concerning it, and this without reflecting that it might increase Emily's emotion, but because they were particularly interesting to herself. "A little before my lady's death," said she, "when the pains were gone off, she called me to her, and, stretching out her hand to me, I sat down just there—where the curtain falls upon the bed. How well I remember

member her look at the time—death was in it!—I can almoſt fancy I ſee her now.—There ſhe lay, ma'amſelle—her face was upon the pillow there! This black counterpane was not upon the bed then; it was laid on, after her death, and ſhe was laid out upon it."

Emily turned to look within the duſky curtains, as if ſhe could have ſeen the countenance of which Dorothée ſpoke. The edge of the white pillow only appeared above the blackneſs of the pall, but, as her eyes wandered over the pall itſelf, ſhe fancied ſhe ſaw it move. Without ſpeaking, ſhe caught Dorothée's arm, who, ſurpriſed by the action, and by the look of terror that accompanied it, turned her eyes from Emily to the bed, where, in the next moment ſhe, too, ſaw the pall ſlowly lifted, and fall again.

Emily attempted to go, but Dorothée ſtood fixed and gazing upon the bed; and, at length, ſaid—"It is only the wind, that waves it, ma'amſelle; we have left all the doors

doors open; ſee how the air waves the lamp, too.—It is only the wind."

She had ſcarcely uttered theſe words, when the pall was more violently agitated than before; but Emily, ſomewhat aſhamed of her terrors, ſtepped back to the bed, willing to be convinced that the wind only had occaſioned her alarm; when, as ſhe gazed within the curtains, the pall moved again, and, in the next moment, the apparition of a human countenance roſe above it.

Screaming with terror, they both fled, and got out of the chamber as faſt as their trembling limbs would bear them, leaving open the doors of all the rooms, through which they paſſed. When they reached the ſtair-caſe, Dorothée threw open a chamber-door, where ſome of the female ſervants ſlept, and ſunk breathleſs on the bed; while Emily, deprived of all preſence of mind, made only a feeble attempt to conceal the occaſion of her terror from the aſtoniſhed ſervants; and, though Dorothée, when ſhe could ſpeak, endeavoured to laugh at her

own

own fright, and was joined by Emily, no remonſtrances could prevail with the ſervants, who had quickly taken the alarm, to paſs even the remainder of the night in a room ſo near to theſe terrific chambers.

Dorothée having accompanied Emily to her own apartment, they then began to talk over, with ſome degree of coolneſs, the ſtrange circumſtance, that had juſt occurred; and Emily would almoſt have doubted her own perceptions, had not thoſe of Dorothée atteſted their truth. Having now mentioned what ſhe had obſerved in the outer chamber, ſhe aſked the houſekeeper, whether ſhe was certain no door had been left unfaſtened, by which a perſon might ſecretly have entered the apartments? Dorothée replied, that ſhe had conſtantly kept the keys of the ſeveral doors in her own poſſeſſion; that, when ſhe had gone her rounds through the caſtle, as ſhe frequently did, to examine if all was ſafe, ſhe had tried theſe doors among the reſt, and had always found them faſtened. It

was,

was, therefore, impoſſible, ſhe added, that any perſon could have got admittance into the apartments; and, if they could—it was very improbable they ſhould have choſen to ſleep in a place ſo cold and forlorn.

Emily obſerved, that their viſit to theſe chambers had, perhaps, been watched, and that ſome perſon, for a frolic, had followed them into the rooms, with a deſign to frighten them, and, while they were in the oriel, had taken the opportunity of concealing himſelf in the bed.

Dorothée allowed, that this was poſſible, till ſhe recollected, that, on entering the apartments, ſhe had turned the key of the outer door, and this, which had been done to prevent their viſit being noticed by any of the family, who might happen to be up, muſt effectually have excluded every perſon, except themſelves, from the chambers; and ſhe now perſiſted in affirming, that the ghaſtly countenance ſhe had ſeen was nothing human, but ſome dreadful apparition.

Emily

Emily was very ſolemnly affected. Of whatever nature might be the appearance ſhe had witneſſed, whether human or ſupernatural, the fate of the deceaſed Marchioneſs was a truth not to be doubted; and this unaccountable circumſtance, occurring in the very ſcene of her ſufferings, affected Emily's imagination with a ſuperſtitious awe, to which, after having detected the fallacies at Udolpho, ſhe might not have yielded, had ſhe been ignorant of the unhappy ſtory, related by the houſekeeper. Her ſhe now ſolemnly conjured to conceal the occurrence of this night, and to make light of the terror ſhe had already betrayed, that the Count might not be diſtreſſed by reports, which would certainly ſpread alarm and confuſion among his family. "Time," ſhe added, "may explain this myſterious affair; meanwhile let us watch the event in ſilence."

Dorothée readily acquieſced; but ſhe now recollected that ſhe had left all the doors of the north ſuite of rooms open, and,

not

not having courage to return alone to lock even the outer one, Emily, after ſome effort, ſo far conquered her own fears, that ſhe offered to accompany her to the foot of the back ſtair-caſe, and to wait there while Dorothée aſcended, whoſe reſolution being reaſſured by this circumſtance, ſhe conſented to go, and they left Emily's apartment together.

No ſound diſturbed the ſtillneſs, as they paſſed along the halls and galleries; but, on reaching the foot of the back ſtair-caſe, Dorothée's reſolution failed again: having, however, pauſed a moment to liſten, and no ſound being heard above, ſhe aſcended, leaving Emily below, and, ſcarcely ſuffering her eye to glance within the firſt chamber, ſhe faſtened the door, which ſhut up the whole ſuite of apartments, and returned to Emily.

As they ſtepped along the paſſage, leading into the great hall, a ſound of lamentation was heard, which ſeemed to come from the hall itſelf, and they ſtopped in new

alarm to liſten, when Emily preſently diſtinguiſhed the voice of Annette, whom ſhe found croſſing the hall, with another female ſervant, and ſo terrified by the report, which the other maids had ſpread, that, believing ſhe could be ſafe only where her lady was, ſhe was going for refuge to her apartment. Emily's endeavours to laugh, or to argue her out of theſe terrors, were equally vain, and, in compaſſion to her diſtreſs, ſhe conſented that ſhe ſhould remain in her room during the night.

CHAP. V.

" Hail, mildly-pleaſing Solitude!
Companion of the wiſe and good!
. . . . . .
Thine is the balmy breath of morn,
Juſt as the dew-bent roſe is born.
. . . . . .
But chief when evening ſcenes decay
And the faint landſcape ſwims away,
Thine is the doubtful, ſoft decline,
And that beſt hour of muſing thine."

THOMSON.

EMILY's injunctions to Annette to be ſilent on the ſubject of her terror were ineffectual, and the occurrence of the preceding night ſpread ſuch alarm among the ſervants, who now all affirmed, that they had frequently heard unaccountable noiſes in the chateau, that a report ſoon reached the Count of the north ſide of the caſtle being haunted. He treated this, at firſt, with ridicule, but, perceiving, that it was productive of ſerious evil, in the confuſion it occaſioned among his houſehold, he forbade any perſon to repeat it, on pain of puniſh-

The arrival of a party of his friends ſoon withdrew his thoughts entirely from this ſubject, and his ſervants had now little leiſure to brood over it, except, indeed, in the evenings after ſupper, when they all aſſembled in their hall, and related ſtories of ghoſts, till they feared to look round the room; ſtarted, if the echo of a cloſing door murmured along the paſſage, and refuſed to go ſingly to any part of the caſtle.

On theſe occaſions Annette made a diſtinguiſhed figure. When ſhe told not only of all the wonders ſhe had witneſſed, but of all that ſhe had imagined, in the caſtle of Udolpho, with the ſtory of the ſtrange diſappearance of Signora Laurentini, ſhe made no trifling impreſſion on the mind of her attentive auditors. Her ſuſpicions, concerning Montoni, ſhe would alſo have freely diſcloſed, had not Ludovico, who was now in the ſervice of the Count, prudently checked her loquacity, whenever it pointed to that ſubject.

Among the viſitors at the chateau was

the Baron de Saint Foix, an old friend of the Count, and his ſon, the Chevalier St. Foix, a ſenſible and amiable young man, who, having in the preceding year ſeen the Lady Blanche, at Paris, had become her declared admirer. The friendſhip, which the Count had long entertained for his father, and the equality of their circumſtances made him ſecretly approve of the connection; but, thinking his daughter at this time too young to fix her choice for life, and wiſhing to prove the ſincerity and ſtrength of the Chevalier's attachment, he then rejected his ſuit, though without forbidding his future hope. This young man now came, with the Baron his father, to claim the reward of a ſteady affection, a claim, which the Count admitted and which Blanche did not reject.

While theſe viſitors were at the chateau, it became a ſcene of gaiety and ſplendour. The pavilion in the woods was fitted up and frequented, in the fine evenings, as a ſupper-room, when the hour uſually concluded

cluded with a concert, at which the Count and Counteſs, who were ſcientific performers, and the Chevaliers Henri and St. Foix, with the Lady Blanche and Emily, whoſe voices and fine taſte compenſated for the want of more ſkilful execution, uſually aſſiſted. Several of the Count's ſervants performed on horns and other inſtruments, ſome of which placed at a little diſtance among the woods, ſpoke, in ſweet reſponſe, to the harmony, that proceeded from the pavilion.

At any other period, theſe parties would have been delightful to Emily; but her ſpirits were now oppreſſed with a melancholy, which ſhe perceived that no kind of what is called amuſement had power to diſſipate, and which the tender and, frequently, pathetic, melody of theſe concerts ſometimes increaſed to a very painful degree.

She was particularly fond of walking in the woods, that hung on a promontory, overlooking the ſea. Their luxuriant ſhade was ſoothing to her penſive mind, and, in the partial views, which they afforded of

the Mediterranean, with its winding ſhores and paſſing ſails, tranquil beauty was united with grandeur. The paths were rude and frequently overgrown with vegetation, but their taſteful owner would ſuffer little to be done to them, and ſcarcely a ſingle branch to be lopped from the venerable trees. On an eminence, in one of the moſt ſequeſtered parts of theſe woods, was a ruſtic ſeat, formed of the trunk of a decayed oak, which had once been a noble tree, and of which many lofty branches ſtill flouriſhing united with beech and pines to over-canopy the ſpot. Beneath their deep umbrage, the eye paſſed over the tops of other woods, to the Mediterranean, and, to the left, through an opening, was ſeen a ruined watch tower, ſtanding on a point of rock, near the ſea, and riſing from among the tufted foliage.

Hither Emily often came alone in the ſilence of evening, and, ſoothed by the ſcenery and by the faint murmur, that roſe from the waves, would ſit, till darkneſs obliged her to return to the chateau. Frequently,

quently, alſo, ſhe viſited the watch-tower, which commanded the entire proſpect, and, when ſhe leaned againſt its broken walls, and thought of Valancourt, ſhe not once imagined, what was ſo true, that this tower had been almoſt as frequently his reſort, as her own, ſince his eſtrangement from the neighbouring chateau.

One evening, ſhe lingered here to a late hour. She had ſat on the ſteps of the building, watching, in tranquil melancholy, the gradual effect of evening over the extenſive proſpect, till the gray waters of the Mediterranean and the maſſy woods were almoſt the only features of the ſcene, that remained viſible; when, as ſhe gazed alternately on theſe, and on the mild blue of the heavens, where the firſt pale ſtar of evening appeared, ſhe perſonified the hour in the following lines:—

SONG OF THE EVENING HOUR.

Laſt of the Hours, that track the fading Day,
I move along the realms of twilight air,
And hear, remote, the choral ſong decay
Of ſiſter-nymphs, who dance around his car.

Then, as I follow through the azure void,
His partial ſplendour from my ſtraining eye
Sinks in the depths of ſpace; my only guide
His faint ray dawning on the fartheſt ſky;

Save that ſweet, lingering ſtrain of gayer Hours!
Whoſe cloſe my voice prolongs in dying notes,
While mortals on the green earth own its pow'rs,
As downward on the evening gale it floats.

When fades along the weſt the Sun's laſt beam
As, weary, to the nether world he goes,
And mountain-ſummits catch the purple gleam,
And ſlumbering ocean faint and fainter glows,

Silent upon the globe's broad ſhade I ſteal,
And o'er its dry turf ſhed the cooling dews,
And ev'ry fever'd herb and flow'ret heal,
And all their fragrance on the air diffuſe.

Where'er I move, a tranquil pleaſure reigns;
O'er all the ſcene the duſky tints I ſend,
That foreſts wild and mountains, ſtretching plains
And peopled towns, in ſoft confuſion blend.

Wide o'er the world I waft the freſh'ning wind,
Low breathing through the woods and twilight vale,
In whiſpers ſoft, that woo the penſive mind
Of him, who loves my lonely ſteps to hail.

His tender oaten reed I watch to hear,
Stealing its ſweetneſs o'er ſome plaining rill,
Or ſoothing ocean's wave, when ſtorms are near,
Or ſwelling in the breeze from diſtant hill!

I wake

I wake the fairy elves, who ſhun the light;
When, from their bloſſom'd beds, they ſlily peep,
And ſpy my pale ſtar, leading on the night,—
Forth to their games and revelry they leap;

Send all the priſon'd ſweets abroad in air,
That with them ſlumber'd in the flow'ret's cell;
Then to the ſhores and moon-light brooks repair,
Till the high larks their matin-carol ſwell.

The wood-nymphs hail my airs and temper'd ſhade,
With ditties ſoft and lightly ſportive dance,
On river margin of ſome bow'ry glade,
And ſtrew their freſh buds as my ſteps advance:

But ſwift I paſs, and diſtant regions trace,
For moon-beams ſilver all the eaſtern cloud;
And Day's laſt crimſon veſtige fades apace;
Down the ſteep weſt I fly from Midnight's ſhroud.

The moon was now riſing out of the ſea. She watched its gradual progreſs, the extending line of radiance it threw upon the waters, the ſparkling oars, the ſail faintly ſilvered, and the wood-tops and the battlements of the watch tower, at whoſe foot ſhe was ſitting, juſt tinted with the rays. Emily's ſpirits were in harmony with this ſcene. As ſhe ſat meditating, ſounds ſtole by her on the air, which ſhe immediately knew to be the muſic and the voice ſhe had formerly heard at midnight, and the

emotion of awe, which ſhe felt, was not unmixed with terror, when ſhe conſidered her remote and lonely ſituation. The ſounds drew nearer. She would have riſen to leave the place, but they ſeemed to come from the way ſhe muſt have taken towards the chateau, and ſhe awaited the event in trembling expectation. The ſounds continued to approach, for ſome time, and then ceaſed. Emily ſat liſtening, gazing and unable to move, when ſhe ſaw a figure emerge from the ſhade of the woods and paſs along the bank, at ſome little diſtance before her. It went ſwiftly, and her ſpirits were ſo overcome with awe, that, though ſhe ſaw, ſhe did not much obſerve it.

Having left the ſpot, with a reſolution never again to viſit it alone, at ſo late an hour, ſhe began to approach the chateau, when ſhe heard voices calling her from the part of the wood, which was neareſt to it. They were the ſhouts of the Count's ſervants, who were ſent to ſearch for her; and when ſhe entered the ſupper-room, where

he

he ſat with Henri and Blanche, he gently reproached her with a look, which ſhe bluſhed to have deſerved.

This little occurrence deeply impreſſed her mind, and, when ſhe withdrew to her own room, it recalled ſo forcibly the circumſtances ſhe had witneſſed, a few nights before, that ſhe had ſcarcely courage to remain alone. She watched to a late hour, when, no ſound having renewed her fears, ſhe, at length, ſunk to repoſe. But this was of ſhort continuance, for ſhe was diſturbed by a loud and unuſual noiſe, that ſeemed to come from the gallery, into which her chamber opened. Groans were diſtinctly heard, and, immediately after, a dead weight fell againſt her door, with a violence, that threatened to burſt it open. She called loudly to know who was there, but received no anſwer, though, at intervals, ſhe ſtill thought ſhe heard ſomething like a low moaning. Fear deprived her of the power to move. Soon after, ſhe heard

footſteps in a remote part of the gallery, and, as they approached, ſhe called more loudly than before, till the ſteps pauſed at her door. She then diſtinguiſhed the voices of ſeveral of the ſervants, who ſeemed too much engaged by ſome circumſtance without, to attend to her calls; but, Annette ſoon after entering the room for water, Emily underſtood, that one of the maids had fainted, whom ſhe immediately deſired them to bring into her room, where ſhe aſſiſted to reſtore her. When this girl had recovered her ſpeech, ſhe affirmed, that, as ſhe was paſſing up the back ſtair-caſe, in the way to her chamber, ſhe had ſeen an apparition on the ſecond landing-place; ſhe held the lamp low, ſhe ſaid, that ſhe might pick her way, ſeveral of the ſtairs being infirm and even decayed, and it was upon raiſing her eyes, that ſhe ſaw this appearance. It ſtood for a moment in the corner of the landing-place, which ſhe was approaching, and then, gliding up the

ſtairs,

ſtairs, vaniſhed at the door of the apartment, that had been lately opened. She heard afterwards a hollow ſound.

"Then the devil has got a key to that apartment," ſaid Dorothée, "for it could be nobody but he; I locked the door myſelf!"

The girl, ſpringing down the ſtairs and paſſing up the great ſtair-caſe, had run, with a faint ſcream, till ſhe reached the gallery, where ſhe fell, groaning, at Emily's door.

Gently chiding her for the alarm ſhe had occaſioned, Emily tried to make her aſhamed of her fears; but the girl perſiſted in ſaying, that ſhe had ſeen an apparition, till ſhe went to her own room, whither ſhe was accompanied by all the ſervants preſent, except Dorothée, who, at Emily's requeſt, remained with her during the night. Emily was perplexed, and Dorothée was terrified, and mentioned many occurrences of former times, which had long ſince confirmed her ſuperſtitions; among theſe, according to

her belief, ſhe had once witneſſed an appearance, like that juſt deſcribed, and on the very ſame ſpot, and it was the remembrance of it, that had made her pauſe, when ſhe was going to aſcend the ſtairs with Emily, and which had increaſed her reluctance to open the north apartments. Whatever might be Emily's opinions, ſhe did not diſcloſe them, but liſtened attentively to all that Dorothée communicated, which occaſioned her much thought and perplexity.

From this night the terror of the ſervants increaſed to ſuch an exceſs, that ſeveral of them determined to leave the chateau, and requeſted their diſcharge of the Count, who, if he had any faith in the ſubject of their alarm, thought proper to diſſemble it, and, anxious to avoid the inconvenience that threatened him, employed ridicule and then argument to convince them they had nothing to apprehend from ſupernatural agency. But fear had rendered their minds inacceſſible to reaſon; and it was now, that Ludovico proved at once

his

his courage and his gratitude for the kindneſs he had received from the Count, by offering to watch, during a night, in the ſuite of rooms, reputed to be haunted. He feared, he ſaid, no ſpirits, and, if any thing of human form appeared—he would prove that he dreaded that as little.

The Count pauſed upon the offer, while the ſervants, who heard it, looked upon one another in doubt and amazement, and Annette, terrified for the ſafety of Ludovico, employed tears and entreaties to diſſuade him from his purpoſe.

"You are a bold fellow," ſaid the Count, ſmiling, "Think well of what you are going to encounter, before you finally determine upon it. However, if you perſevere in your reſolution, I will accept your offer, and your intrepidity ſhall not go unrewarded."

"I deſire no reward, your *Excellenza*," replied Ludovico, "but your approbation. Your *Excellenza* has been ſufficiently good to me already; but I wiſh to have arms, that

that I may be equal to my enemy, if he ſhould appear."

"Your ſword cannot defend you againſt a ghoſt," replied the Count, throwing a glance of irony upon the other ſervants, "neither can bars, or bolts; for a ſpirit, you know, can glide through a key-hole, as eaſily as through a door."

"Give me a ſword, my lord Count," ſaid Ludovico, "and I will lay all the ſpirits, that ſhall attack me, in the red ſea."

"Well," ſaid the Count, "you ſhall have a ſword, and good cheer, too; and your brave comrades here will, perhaps, have courage enough to remain another night in the chateau, ſince your boldneſs will certainly, for this night, at leaſt, confine all the malice of the ſpectre to yourſelf."

Curioſity now ſtruggled with fear in the minds of ſeveral of his fellow ſervants, and, at length, they reſolved to await the event of Ludovico's raſhneſs.

Emily

Emily was ſurpriſed and concerned, when ſhe heard of his intention, and was frequently inclined to mention what ſhe had witneſſed in the north apartments to the Count, for ſhe could not entirely diveſt herſelf of fears for Ludovico's ſafety, though her reaſon repreſented theſe to be abſurd. The neceſſity, however, of concealing the ſecret, with which Dorothée had entruſted her, and which muſt have been mentioned, with the late occurrence, in excuſe for her having ſo privately viſited the north apartments, kept her entirely ſilent on the ſubject of her apprehenſion; and ſhe tried only to ſooth Annette, who held, that Ludovico was certainly to be deſtroyed; and who was much leſs affected by Emily's conſolatory efforts, than by the manner of old Dorothée, who often, as ſhe exclaimed Ludovico, ſighed, and threw up her eyes to heaven.

CHAP. VI.

" Ye gods of quiet, and of ſleep profound!
Whoſe ſoft dominion o'er this caſtle ſways,
And all the widely-ſilent places round,
Forgive me, if my trembling pen diſplays
What never yet was ſung in mortal lays."

THOMSON.

THE Count gave orders for the north apartments to be opened and prepared for the reception of Ludovico; but Dorothée, remembering what ſhe had lately witneſſed there, feared to obey, and, not one of the other ſervants daring to venture thither, the rooms remained ſhut up till the time when Ludovico was to retire thither for the night, an hour, for which the whole houſehold waited with impatience.

After ſupper, Ludovico, by the order of the Count, attended him in his cloſet, where they remained alone for near half an hour, and, on leaving which, his Lord delivered to him a ſword.

" It

" It has ſeen ſervice in mortal quarrels," ſaid the Count, jocoſely, " you will uſe it honourably, no doubt, in a ſpiritual one. To-morrow let me hear that there is not one ghoſt remaining in the chateau."

Ludovico received it with a reſpectful bow. " You ſhall be obeyed, my Lord," ſaid he; " I will engage, that no ſpectre ſhall diſturb the peace of the chateau after this night."

They now returned to the ſupper-room, where the Count's gueſts awaited to accompany him and Ludovico to the door of the north apartments, and Dorothée, being ſummoned for the keys, delivered them to Ludovico, who then led the way, followed by moſt of the inhabitants of the chateau. Having reached the back ſtair-caſe, ſeveral of the ſervants ſhrunk back, and refuſed to go further, but the reſt followed him to the top of the ſtair-caſe, where a broad landing place allowed them to flock round him, while he applied the key to the door, during which they watched him with as much

much eager curioſity as if he had been performing ſome magical rite.

Ludovico, unaccuſtomed to the lock, could not turn it, and Dorothée, who had lingered far behind, was called forward, under whoſe hand the door opened ſlowly, and, her eye glancing within the duſky chamber, ſhe uttered a ſudden ſhriek, and retreated. At this ſignal of alarm, the greater part of the crowd hurried down the ſtairs, and the Count, Henri and Ludovico were left alone to purſue the enquiry, who inſtantly ruſhed into the apartment, Ludovico with a drawn ſword, which he had juſt time to draw from the ſcabbard, the Count with the lamp in his hand, and Henri carrying a baſket, containing proviſion for the courageous adventurer.

Having looked haſtily round the firſt room, where nothing appeared to juſtify alarm, they paſſed on to the ſecond; and, here too all being quiet, they proceeded to a third in a more tempered ſtep. The Count had now leiſure to ſmile at the diſcompoſure,

compoſure, into which he had been ſurpriſed, and to aſk Ludovico in which room he deſigned to paſs the night.

" There are ſeveral chambers beyond theſe, your *Excellenza*," ſaid Ludovico, pointing to a door, " and in one of them is a bed, they ſay. I will paſs the night there, and when I am weary of watching, I can lie down."

" Good;" ſaid the Count, " let us go on. You ſee theſe rooms ſhew nothing but damp walls and decaying furniture. I have been ſo much engaged ſince I came to the chateau, that I have not looked into them till now. Remember, Ludovico, to tell the houſekeeper, to-morrow, to throw open theſe windows. The damaſk hangings are dropping to pieces, I will have them taken down, and this antique furniture removed."

" Dear ſir!" ſaid Henri, " here is an arm-chair ſo maſſy with gilding, that it reſembles one of the ſtate chairs at the Louvre, more than any thing elſe."

" Yes," ſaid the Count, ſtopping a moment

ment to ſurvey it, " there is a hiſtory belonging to that chair, but I have not time to tell it.—Let us paſs on. This ſuite runs to a greater extent than I had imagined; it is many years ſince I was in them. But where is the bed-room you ſpeak of, Ludovico?—theſe are only anti-chambers to the great drawing room. I remember them in their ſplendour!"

" The bed, my Lord," replied Ludovico, " they told me, was in a room that opens beyond the ſaloon, and terminates the ſuite."

" O, here is the ſaloon," ſaid the Count, as they entered the ſpacious apartment, in which Emily and Dorothée had reſted. He here ſtood for a moment, ſurveying the reliques of faded grandeur, which it exhibited—the ſumptuous tapeſtry—the long and low ſophas of velvet, with frames heavily carved and gilded—the floor inlaid with ſmall ſquares of fine marble, and covered in the centre with a piece of very rich tapeſtry work—the caſements of painted glaſs, and the large Venetian mirrors, of a ſize

ſize and quality, ſuch as at that period France could not make, which reflected, on every ſide, the ſpacious apartment. Theſe had formerly alſo reflected a gay and brilliant ſcene, for this had been the ſtate-room of the chateau, and here the Marchioneſs had held the aſſemblies, that made part of the feſtivities of her nuptials. If the wand of a magician could have recalled the vaniſhed groups, many of them vaniſhed even from the earth! that once had paſſed over theſe poliſhed mirrors, what a varied and contraſted picture would they have exhibited with the preſent! Now, inſtead of a blaze of lights, and a ſplendid and buſy crowd, they reflected only the rays of the one glimmering lamp, which the Count held up, and which ſcarcely ſerved to ſhew the three forlorn figures, that ſtood ſurveying the room, and the ſpacious and duſky walls around them.

"Ah!" ſaid the Count to Henri, awaking from his deep reverie, "how the ſcene is changed ſince laſt I ſaw it! I was a young

young man, then, and the Marchioneſs was alive and in her bloom; many other perſons were here, too, who are now no more! There ſtood the orcheſtra; here we tripped in many a ſprightly maze—the walls echoing to the dance! Now, they reſound only one feeble voice—and even that will, ere long, be heard no more! My ſon, remember, that I was once as young as yourſelf, and that you muſt paſs away like thoſe, who have preceded you—like thoſe, who, as they ſung and danced in this once gay apartment, forgot, that years are made up of moments, and that every ſtep they took carried them nearer to their graves. But ſuch reflections are uſeleſs, I had almoſt ſaid criminal, unleſs they teach us to prepare for eternity, ſince, otherwiſe, they cloud our preſent happineſs, without guiding us to a future one. But enough of this; let us go on."

Ludovico now opened the door of the bed-room, and the Count, as he entered, was ſtruck with the funereal appearance,

which the dark arras gave to it. He approached the bed, with an emotion of ſolemnity, and, perceiving it to be covered with the pall of black velvet, pauſed; "What can this mean?" ſaid he, as he gazed upon it.

"I have heard, my Lord," ſaid Ludovico, as he ſtood at the feet, looking within the canopied curtains, "that the Lady Marchioneſs de Villeroi died in this chamber, and remained here till ſhe was removed to be buried; and this, perhaps, Signor, may account for the pall."

The Count made no reply, but ſtood for a few moments engaged in thought, and evidently much affected. Then, turning to Ludovico, he aſked him with a ſerious air, whether he thought his courage would ſupport him through the night? "If you doubt this," added the Count, "do not be aſhamed to own it; I will releaſe you from your engagement, without expoſing you to the triumphs of your fellow-ſervants."

Ludovico

Ludovico paused; pride, and something very like fear, seemed struggling in his breast; pride, however, was victorious;—he blushed, and his hesitation ceased.

"No, my Lord," said he, "I will go through with what I have begun; and I am grateful for your consideration. On that hearth I will make a fire, and, with the good cheer in this basket, I doubt not I shall do well."

"Be it so," said the Count; "but how will you beguile the tediousness of the night, if you do not sleep?"

"When I am weary, my Lord," replied Ludovico, "I shall not fear to sleep; in the meanwhile I have a book that will entertain me."

"Well," said the Count, "I hope nothing will disturb you; but if you should be seriously alarmed in the night, come to my apartment. I have too much confidence in your good sense and courage, to believe you will be alarmed on slight grounds; or suffer the gloom of this chamber, or its remote situation,

ſituation, to overcome you with ideal terrors. To-morrow, I ſhall have to thank you for an important ſervice; theſe rooms ſhall then be thrown open, and my people will be convinced of their error. Good night, Ludovico; let me ſee you early in the morning, and remember what I lately ſaid to you."

"I will, my Lord; good night to your *Excellenza*; let me attend you with the light."

He lighted the Count and Henri through the chambers to the outer door: on the landing-place ſtood a lamp, which one of the affrighted ſervants had left, and Henri, as he took it up, again bade Ludovico good night, who, having reſpectfully returned the wiſh, cloſed the door upon them, and faſtened it. Then, as he retired to the bed-chamber, he examined the rooms, through which he paſſed, with more minuteneſs than he had done before, for he apprehended that ſome perſon might have concealed himſelf in them, for the purpoſe

of frightening him. No one, however, but himſelf, was in theſe chambers, and, leaving open the doors, through which he paſſed, he came again to the great drawing-room, whoſe ſpaciouſneſs and ſilent gloom ſomewhat awed him. For a moment he ſtood, looking back through the long ſuite of rooms he had quitted, and, as he turned, perceiving a light and his own figure, reflected in one of the large mirrors, he ſtarted. Other objects too were ſeen obſcurely on its dark ſurface, but he pauſed not to examine them, and returned haſtily into the bed-room, as he ſurveyed which, he obſerved the door of the oriel, and opened it. All within was ſtill. On looking round, his eye was arreſted by the portrait of the deceaſed Marchioneſs, upon which he gazed, for a conſiderable time, with great attention and ſome ſurpriſe; and then, having examined the cloſet, he returned into the bed-room, where he kindled a wood fire, the bright blaze of which revived his ſpirits, which had begun to yield

to the gloom and ſilence of the place, for guſts of wind alone broke at intervals this ſilence. He now drew a ſmall table and a chair near the fire, took a bottle of wine, and ſome cold proviſion out of his baſket, and regaled himſelf. When he had finiſhed his repaſt, he laid his ſword upon the table, and, not feeling diſpoſed to ſleep, drew from his pocket the book he had ſpoken of.—It was a volume of old Provençal tales. Having ſtirred the fire into a brighter blaze, trimmed his lamp, and drawn his chair upon the hearth, he began to read, and his attention was ſoon wholly occupied by the ſcenes, which the page diſcloſed.

The Count, meanwhile, had returned to the ſupper-room, whither thoſe of the party, who had attended him to the north apartment, had retreated, upon hearing Dorothée's ſcream, and who were now earneſt in their enquiries concerning thoſe chambers. The Count rallied his gueſts on their precipitate retreat, and on the ſuperſtitious inclination which had occaſioned it, and this

led to the queſtion, Whether the ſpirit, after it has quitted the body, is ever permitted to reviſit the earth; and if it is, whether it was poſſible for ſpirits to become viſible to the ſenſe. The Baron was of opinion, that the firſt was probable, and the laſt was poſſible, and he endeavoured to juſtify this opinion by reſpectable authorities, both ancient and modern, which he quoted. The Count, however, was decidedly againſt him, and a long converſation enſued, in which the uſual arguments on theſe ſubjects were on both ſides brought forward with ſkill, and diſcuſſed with candour, but without converting either party to the opinion of his opponent. The effect of their converſation on their auditors was various. Though the Count had much the ſuperiority of the Baron in point of argument, he had conſiderably fewer adherents; for that love, ſo natural to the human mind, of whatever is able to diſtend its faculties with wonder and aſtoniſhment, attached the majority of the company to the ſide of the Baron; and, though many

of

of the Count's propoſitions were unanſwerable, his opponents were inclined to believe this the conſequence of their own want of knowledge, on ſo abſtracted a ſubject, rather than that arguments did not exiſt, which were forcible enough to conquer his.

Blanche was pale with attention, till the ridicule in her father's glance called a bluſh upon her countenance, and ſhe then endeavoured to forget the ſuperſtitious tales ſhe had been told in her convent. Meanwhile, Emily had been liſtening with deep attention to the diſcuſſion of what was to her a very intereſting queſtion, and, remembering the appearance ſhe had witneſſed in the apartment of the late Marchioneſs, ſhe was frequently chilled with awe. Several times ſhe was on the point of mentioning what ſhe had ſeen, but the fear of giving pain to the Count, and the dread of his ridicule, reſtrained her; and, awaiting in anxious expectation the event of Ludovico's intrepidity, ſhe determined that her future ſilence ſhould depend upon it.

When the party had ſeparated for the

night, and the Count retired to his dreſſing-room, the remembrance of the deſolate ſcenes he had lately witneſſed in his own manſion deeply affected him, but at length he was arouſed from his reverie and his ſilence. "What muſic is that I hear?"—ſaid he ſuddenly to his valet, "Who plays at this late hour?"

The man made no reply, and the Count continued to liſten, and then added, "That is no common muſician; he touches the inſtrument with a delicate hand; who is it, Pierre?"

"My Lord!" ſaid the man, heſitatingly.

"Who plays that inſtrument?" repeated the Count.

"Does not your lordſhip know, then?" ſaid the valet.

"What mean you?" ſaid the Count, ſomewhat ſternly.

"Nothing, my Lord, I meant nothing," rejoined the man ſubmiſſively—"Only—that muſic—goes about the houſe at midnight

night often, and I thought your lordſhip might have heard it before."

"Muſic goes about the houſe at midnight! Poor fellow!—does nobody dance to the muſic, too?"

"It is not in the chateau, I believe, my Lord; the ſounds come from the woods, they ſay, though they ſeem ſo near;—but then a ſpirit can do any thing!"

"Ah, poor fellow!" ſaid the Count, "I perceive you are as ſilly as the reſt of them; to-morrow, you will be convinced of your ridiculous error. But hark!—what voice is that?"

"Oh, my Lord! that is the voice we often hear with the muſic."

"Often!" ſaid the Count, "How often, pray? It is a very fine one."

"Why, my Lord, I myſelf have not heard it more than two or three times, but there are thoſe who have lived here longer, that have heard it often enough."

"What a ſwell was that!" exclaimed the Count, as he ſtill liſtened, "And now,

what a dying cadence! This is ſurely ſomething more than mortal!"

"That is what they ſay, my Lord," ſaid the valet; "they ſay it is nothing mortal, that utters it; and if I might ſay my thoughts"——

"Peace!" ſaid the Count, and he liſtened till the ſtrain died away.

"This is ſtrange!" ſaid he, as he turned from the window, "Cloſe the caſements, Pierre."

Pierre obeyed, and the Count ſoon after diſmiſſed him, but did not ſo ſoon loſe the remembrance of the muſic, which long vibrated in his fancy in tones of melting ſweetneſs, while ſurpriſe and perplexity engaged his thoughts.

Ludovico, meanwhile, in his remote chamber, heard, now and then, the faint echo of a cloſing door, as the family retired to reſt, and then the hall clock, at a great diſtance, ſtrike twelve. "It is midnight," ſaid he, and he looked ſuſpiciouſly round the ſpacious chamber. The fire on the hearth

hearth was now nearly expiring, for his attention having been engaged by the book before him, he had forgotten every thing beſides; but he ſoon added freſh wood, not becauſe he was cold, though the night was ſtormy, but becauſe he was cheerleſs; and, having again trimmed his lamp, he poured out a glaſs of wine, drew his chair nearer to the crackling blaze, tried to be deaf to the wind, that howled mournfully at the caſements, endeavoured to abſtract his mind from the melancholy, that was ſtealing upon him, and again took up his book. It had been lent to him by Dorothée, who had formerly picked it up in an obſcure corner of the Marquis's library, and who, having opened it and perceived ſome of the marvels it related, had carefully preſerved it for her own entertainment, its condition giving her ſome excuſe for detaining it from its proper ſtation. The damp corner into which it had fallen, had cauſed the cover to be diſfigured and mouldy, and the leaves to be ſo diſcoloured with ſpots, that it was not without

difficulty the letters could be traced. The fictions of the Provençal writers, whether drawn from the Arabian legends, brought by the Saracens into Spain, or recounting the chivalric exploits performed by the cruſaders, whom the Troubadours accompanied to the eaſt, were generally ſplendid and always marvellous, both in ſcenery and incident; and it is not wonderful, that Dorothée and Ludovico ſhould be faſcinated by inventions, which had captivated the careleſs imagination in every rank of ſociety, in a former age. Some of the tales, however, in the book now before Ludovico, were of ſimple ſtructure, and exhibited nothing of the magnificent machinery and heroic manners, which uſually characterized the fables of the twelfth century, and of this deſcription was the one he now happened to open, which, in its original ſtyle, was of great length, but which may be thus ſhortly related. The reader will perceive, that it is ſtrongly tinctured with the ſuperſtition of the times.

THE

THE PROVENÇAL TALE.

"THERE lived, in the province of Bretagne, a noble Baron, famous for his magnificence and courtly hoſpitalities. His caſtle was graced with ladies of exquiſite beauty, and thronged with illuſtrious knights; for the honours he paid to feats of chivalry invited the brave of diſtant countries to enter his liſts, and his court was more ſplendid than thoſe of many princes. Eight minſtrels were retained in his ſervice, who uſed to ſing to their harps romantic fictions, taken from the Arabians, or adventures of chivalry, that befel knights during the cruſades, or the martial deeds of the Baron, their lord;—while he, ſurrounded by his knights and ladies, banqueted in the great hall of his caſtle, where the coſtly tapeſtry, that adorned the walls with pictured exploits of his anceſtors, the caſements of painted glaſs, enriched with armorial bearings, the gorgeous banners, that waved along the roof, the ſumptuous canopies, the profuſion of gold

and ſilver, that glittered on the ſideboards, the numerous diſhes, that covered the tables, the number and gay liveries of the attendants, with the chivalric and ſplendid attire of the gueſts, united to form a ſcene of magnificence, ſuch as we may not hope to ſee in theſe *degenerate days.*

"Of the Baron, the following adventure is related. One night, having retired late from the banquet to his chamber, and diſmiſſed his attendants, he was ſurpriſed by the appearance of a ſtranger of a noble air, but of a ſorrowful and dejected countenance. Believing, that this perſon had been ſecreted in the apartment, ſince it appeared impoſſible he could have lately paſſed the anti-room, unobſerved by the pages in waiting, who would have prevented this intruſion on their lord, the Baron, calling loudly for his people, drew his ſword, which he had not yet taken from his ſide, and ſtood upon his defence. The ſtranger ſlowly advancing, told him, that there was nothing to fear; that he came with no hoſtile deſign, but to communicate

communicate to him a terrible ſecret, which it was neceſſary for him to know.

" The Baron, appeaſed by the courteous manners of the ſtranger, after ſurveying him, for ſome time, in ſilence, returned his ſword into the ſcabbard, and deſired him to explain the means, by which he had obtained acceſs to the chamber, and the purpoſe of this extraordinary viſit.

" Without anſwering either of theſe enquiries, the ſtranger ſaid, that he could not then explain himſelf, but that, if the Baron would follow him to the edge of the foreſt, at a ſhort diſtance from the caſtle walls, he would there convince him, that he had ſomething of importance to diſcloſe.

" This propoſal again alarmed the Baron, who would ſcarcely believe, that the ſtranger meant to draw him to ſo ſolitary a ſpot, at this hour of the night, without harbouring a deſign againſt his life; and he refuſed to go, obſerving at the ſame time, that, if the ſtranger's purpoſe was an honourable one, he would not perſiſt in refuſing to reveal the occaſion

occaſion of his viſit, in the apartment where they were.

" While he ſpoke this, he viewed the ſtranger ſtill more attentively than before, but obſerved no change in his countenance, or any ſymptom, that might intimate a conſciouſneſs of evil deſign. He was habited like a knight, was of a tall and majeſtic ſtature, and of dignified and courteous manners. Still, however, he refuſed to communicate the ſubject of his errand in any place, but that he had mentioned, and, at the ſame time, gave hints concerning the ſecret he would diſcloſe, that awakened a degree of ſolemn curioſity in the Baron, which, at length, induced him to conſent to follow the ſtranger, on certain conditions.

" Sir knight," ſaid he, " I will attend you to the foreſt, and will take with me only four of my people, who ſhall witneſs our conference."

" To this, however, the knight objected.

" What I would diſcloſe," ſaid he, with ſolemnity, " is to you alone. There are only

only three living perſons, to whom the circumſtance is known; it is of more conſequence to you and your houſe, than I ſhall now explain. In future years, you will look back to this night with ſatisfaction or repentance, accordingly as you now determine. As you would hereafter proſper—follow me; I pledge you the honour of a knight, that no evil ſhall befall you;—if you are contented to dare futurity—remain in your chamber, and I will depart as I came."

"Sir knight," replied the Baron, "how is it poſſible, that my future peace can depend upon my preſent determination?"

"That is not now to be told," ſaid the ſtranger, "I have explained myſelf to the utmoſt. It is late; if you follow me it muſt be quickly;—you will do well to conſider the alternative."

"The Baron muſed, and, as he looked upon the knight, he perceived his countenance aſſume a ſingular ſolemnity."

[Here Ludovico thought he heard a noiſe, and he threw a glance round the chamber, and

and then held up the lamp to aſſiſt his obſervation; but, not perceiving any thing to confirm his alarm, he took up the book again and purſued the ſtory.]

"The Baron paced his apartment, for ſome time, in ſilence, impreſſed by the words of the ſtranger, whoſe extraordinary requeſt he feared to grant, and feared, alſo, to refuſe. At length, he ſaid, "Sir knight, you are utterly unknown to me; tell me, yourſelf,—is it reaſonable, that I ſhould truſt myſelf alone with a ſtranger, at this hour, in a ſolitary foreſt? Tell me, at leaſt, who you are, and who aſſiſted to ſecrete you in this chamber."

"The knight frowned at theſe latter words, and was a moment ſilent; then, with a countenance ſomewhat ſtern, he ſaid,

"I am an Engliſh knight; I am called Sir Bevys of Lancaſter,—and my deeds are not unknown at the Holy City, whence I was returning to my native land, when I was benighted in the neighbouring foreſt."

"Your name is not unknown to fame," ſaid

ſaid the Baron, " I have heard of it." (The knight looked haughtily.) " But why, ſince my caſtle is known to entertain all true knights, did not your herald announce you? Why did you not appear at the banquet, where your preſence would have been welcomed, inſtead of hiding yourſelf in my caſtle and ſtealing to my chamber, at midnight?"

" The ſtranger frowned, and turned away in ſilence; but the Baron repeated the queſtions.

" I come not," ſaid the knight, " to anſwer enquiries, but to reveal facts. If you would know more, follow me, and again I pledge the honour of a knight, that you ſhall return in ſafety.—Be quick in your determination—I muſt be gone."

" After ſome further heſitation, the Baron determined to follow the ſtranger, and to ſee the reſult of his extraordinary requeſt; he, therefore, again drew forth his ſword, and, taking up a lamp, bade the knight lead on. The latter obeyed, and, opening the door of the chamber, they paſſed into the anti-

anti-room, where the Baron, ſurpriſed to find all his pages aſleep, ſtopped, and, with haſty violence, was going to reprimand them for their careleſſneſs, when the knight waved his hand, and looked ſo expreſſively upon the Baron, that the latter reſtrained his reſentment, and paſſed on.

" The knight, having deſcended a ſtair-caſe, opened a ſecret door, which the Baron had believed was known only to himſelf, and proceeding through ſeveral narrow and winding paſſages, came, at length, to a ſmall gate, that opened beyond the walls of the caſtle. Meanwhile, the Baron followed in ſilence and amazement, on perceiving that theſe ſecret paſſages were ſo well known to a ſtranger, and felt inclined to return from an adventure, that appeared to partake of treachery, as well as danger. Then, conſidering that he was armed, and obſerving the courteous and noble air of his conductor, his courage returned, he bluſhed, that it had failed him for a moment, and he reſolved to trace the myſtery to its ſource.

" He

"He now found himſelf on the heathy platform, before the great gates of his caſtle, where, on looking up, he perceived lights glimmering in the different caſements of the gueſts, who were retiring to ſleep; and, while he ſhivered in the blaſt, and looked on the dark and deſolate ſcene around him, he thought of the comforts of his warm chamber, rendered cheerful by the blaze of wood, and felt, for a moment, the full contraſt of his preſent ſituation."

[Here Ludovico pauſed a moment, and, looking at his own fire, gave it a brightening ſtir.]

"The wind was ſtrong, and the Baron watched his lamp with anxiety, expecting every moment to ſee it extinguiſhed; but though the flame wavered, it did not expire, and he ſtill followed the ſtranger, who often ſighed as he went, but did not ſpeak.

"When they reached the borders of the foreſt, the knight turned, and raiſed his head, as if he meant to addreſs the Baron, but then, cloſing his lips in ſilence, he walked on.

"As

" As they entered, beneath the dark and ſpreading boughs, the Baron, affected by the ſolemnity of the ſcene, heſitated whether to proceed, and demanded how much further they were to go. The knight replied only by a geſture, and the Baron, with heſitating ſteps and a ſuſpicious eye, followed through an obſcure and intricate path, till, having proceeded a conſiderable way, he again demanded whither they were going, and refuſed to proceed unleſs he was informed.

" As he ſaid this, he looked at his own ſword, and at the knight alternately, who ſhook his head, and whoſe dejected countenance diſarmed the Baron, for a moment, of ſuſpicion.

" A little further is the place, whither I would lead you," ſaid the ſtranger; " no evil ſhall befall you—I have ſworn it on the honour of a knight."

" The Baron, re-aſſured, again followed in ſilence, and they ſoon arrived at a deep receſs of the foreſt, where the dark and lofty

cheſnuts

cheſnuts entirely excluded the ſky, and which was ſo overgrown with underwood, that they proceeded with difficulty. The Knight ſighed deeply as he paſſed, and ſometimes pauſed; and having, at length, reached a ſpot, where the trees crowded into a knot, he turned, and, with a terrific look, pointing to the ground, the Baron ſaw there the body of a man, ſtretched at its length, and welter-ing in blood; a ghaſtly wound was on the forehead, and death appeared already to have contracted the features.

"The Baron, on perceiving the ſpectacle, ſtarted in horror, looked at the knight for explanation, and was then going to raiſe the body and examine if there were yet any re-mains of life; but the ſtranger, waving his hand, fixed upon him a look ſo earneſt and mournful, as not only much ſurpriſed him, but made him deſiſt.

"But, what were the Baron's emotions, when, on holding the lamp near the features of the corpſe, he diſcovered the exact reſem-blance of the ſtranger his conductor, to whom

whom he now looked up in aſtoniſhment and enquiry? As he gazed, he perceived the countenance of the knight change, and begin to fade, till his whole form gradually vaniſhed from his aſtoniſhed ſenſe! While the Baron ſtood, fixed to the ſpot, a voice was heard to utter theſe words:—"

[Ludovico ſtarted, and laid down the book, for he thought he heard a voice in the chamber, and he looked toward the bed, where, however, he ſaw only the dark curtains and the pall. He liſtened, ſcarcely daring to draw his breath, but heard only the diſtant roaring of the ſea in the ſtorm, and the blaſt, that ruſhed by the caſements; when, concluding, that he had been deceived by its ſighings, he took up his book to finiſh the ſtory.]

"While the Baron ſtood, fixed to the ſpot, a voice was heard to utter theſe words:—

"The body of Sir Bevys of Lancaſter, a noble knight of England, lies before you. He was, this night, way-laid and murdered, as he journeyed from the Holy City towards his

his native land. Reſpect the honour of knighthood and the law of humanity; inter the body in chriſtian ground, and cauſe his murderers to be puniſhed. As ye obſerve, or neglect this, ſhall peace and happineſs, or war and miſery, light upon you and your houſe for ever!"

"The Baron, when he recovered from the awe and aſtoniſhment, into which this adventure had thrown him, returned to his caſtle, whither he cauſed the body of Sir Bevys to be removed; and, on the following day, it was interred, with the honours of knighthood, in the chapel of the caſtle, attended by all the noble knights and ladies who graced the court of the Baron de Brunne."

Ludovico, having finiſhed this ſtory, laid aſide the book, for he felt drowſy, and, after putting more wood on the fire and taking another glaſs of wine, he repoſed himſelf in the arm chair on the hearth. In his dream he ſtill beheld the chamber where he really was, and,

and, once or twice, ſtarted from imperfect ſlumbers, imagining he ſaw a man's face, looking over the high back of his arm-chair. This idea had ſo ſtrongly impreſſed him, that, when he raiſed his eyes, he almoſt expected to meet other eyes, fixed upon his own, and he quitted his ſeat and looked behind the chair, before he felt perfectly convinced, that no perſon was there.

Thus cloſed the hour.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

" Enjoy the honey-heavy dew of ſlumber;
Thou haſt no figures, nor no fantaſies,
Which buſy care draws in the brains of men;
Therefore thou ſleep'ſt ſo ſound."

SHAKESPEARE.

THE Count, who had ſlept little during the night, roſe early, and, anxious to ſpeak with Ludovico, went to the north apartment; but, the outer door having been faſtened, on the preceding night, he was obliged to knock loudly for admittance. Neither the knocking, or his voice, was heard; but, conſidering the diſtance of this door from the bed-room, and that Ludovico, wearied with watching, had probably fallen into a deep ſleep, the Count was not ſurpriſed on receiving no anſwer, and, leaving the door, he went down to walk in his grounds.

It was a gray autumnal morning. The

ſun, riſing over Provence, gave only a feeble light, as his rays ſtruggled through the vapours that aſcended from the ſea, and floated heavily over the wood-tops, which were now varied with many a mellow tint of autumn. The ſtorm was paſſed, but the waves were yet violently agitated, and their courſe was traced by long lines of foam, while not a breeze fluttered in the ſails of the veſſels, near the ſhore, that were weighing anchor to depart. The ſtill gloom of the hour was pleaſing to the Count, and he purſued his way through the woods, ſunk in deep thought.

Emily alſo roſe at an early hour, and took her cuſtomary walk along the brow of the promontory, that overhung the Mediterranean. Her mind was now not occupied with the occurrences of the chateau, and Valancourt was the ſubject of her mournful thoughts; whom ſhe had not yet taught herſelf to conſider with indifference, though her judgment conſtantly reproached her for the affection, that lingered

in

in her heart, after her eſteem for him was departed. Remembrance frequently gave her his parting look and the tones of his voice, when he had bade her a laſt farewel; and, ſome accidental aſſociations now recalling theſe circumſtances to her fancy, with peculiar energy, ſhe ſhed bitter tears to the recollection.

Having reached the watch-tower, ſhe ſeated herſelf on the broken ſteps, and, in melancholy dejection, watched the waves, half hid in vapour, as they came rolling towards the ſhore, and threw up their light ſpray round the rocks below. Their hollow murmur and the obſcuring miſts, that came in wreaths up the cliffs, gave a ſolemnity to the ſcene, which was in harmony with the temper of her mind, and ſhe ſat, given up to the remembrance of paſt times, till this became too painful, and ſhe abruptly quitted the place. On paſſing the little gate of the watch-tower, ſhe obſerved letters, engraved on the ſtone poſtern, which ſhe paused to examine, and, though they

appeared to have been rudely cut with a pen-knife, the characters were familiar to her; at length, recognizing the hand-writing of Valancourt, she read, with trembling anxiety, the following lines, entitled

SHIPWRECK.

'Tis solemn midnight! On this lonely steep,
Beneath this watch-tow'r's desolated wall,
Where mystic shapes the wonderer appall,
I rest; and view below the desert deep,
As through tempestuous clouds the moon's cold light
Gleams on the wave. Viewless, the winds of night
With loud mysterious force the billows sweep,
And sullen roar the surges, far below.
In the still pauses of the gust I hear
The voice of spirits, rising sweet and slow,
And oft among the clouds their forms appear.
But hark! what shriek of death comes in the gale,
And in the distant ray what glimmering sail
Bends to the storm?—Now sinks the note of fear!
Ah! wretched mariners!—no more shall day
Unclose his cheering eye to light ye on your way!

From these lines it appeared, that Valancourt had visited the tower; that he had probably been here on the preceding night, for

for it was ſuch an one as they deſcribed, and that he had left the building very lately, ſince it had not long been light, and without light it was impoſſible theſe letters could have been cut. It was thus even probable, that he might be yet in the gardens.

As theſe reflections paſſed rapidly over the mind of Emily, they called up a variety of contending emotions, that almoſt overcame her ſpirits; but her firſt impulſe was to avoid him, and, immediately leaving the tower, ſhe returned, with haſty ſteps, towards the chateau. As ſhe paſſed along ſhe remembered the muſic ſhe had lately heard near the tower, with the figure, which had appeared, and, in this moment of agitation, ſhe was inclined to believe, that ſhe had then heard and ſeen Valancourt; but other recollections ſoon convinced her of her error. On turning into a thicker part of the woods, ſhe perceived a perſon, walking ſlowly in the gloom at ſome little diſtance, and, her mind engaged by the

idea of him, ſhe ſtarted and pauſed, imagining this to be Valancourt. The perſon advanced with quicker ſteps, and, before ſhe could recover recollection enough to avoid him, he ſpoke, and ſhe then knew the voice of the Count, who expreſſed ſome ſurpriſe, on finding her walking at ſo early an hour, and made a feeble effort to rally her on her love of ſolitude. But he ſoon perceived this to be more a ſubject of concern than of light laughter, and, changing his manner, affectionately expoſtulated with Emily, on thus indulging unavailing regret; who, though ſhe acknowledged the juſtneſs of all he ſaid, could not reſtrain her tears, while ſhe did ſo, and he preſently quitted the topic. Expreſſing ſurpriſe at not having yet heard from his friend, the Advocate at Avignon, in anſwer to the queſtions propoſed to him, reſpecting the eſtates of the late Madame Montoni, he, with friendly zeal, endeavoured to cheer Emily with hopes of eſtabliſhing her claim to them; while ſhe felt, that the eſtates could now

con-

contribute little to the happineſs of a life, in which Valancourt had no longer an intereſt.

When they returned to the chateau, Emily retired to her apartment, and Count De Villefort to the door of the north chambers. This was ſtill faſtened; but, being now determined to arouſe Ludovico, he renewed his calls more loudly than before; after which a total ſilence enſued, and the Count, finding all his efforts to be heard ineffectual, at length began to fear, that ſome accident had befallen Ludovico, whom terror of an imaginary being might have deprived of his ſenſes. He, therefore, left the door with an intention of ſummoning his ſervants to force it open, ſome of whom he now heard moving in the lower part of the chateau.

To the Count's enquiries, whether they had ſeen or heard Ludovico, they replied in affright, that not one of them had ventured on the north ſide of the chateau, ſince the preceding night.

" He ſleeps ſoundly then," ſaid the Count, " and is at ſuch a diſtance from the outer door, which is faſtened, that to gain admittance to the chambers it will be neceſſary to force it. Bring an inſtrument, and follow me."

The ſervants ſtood mute and dejected, and it was not till nearly all the houſehold were aſſembled, that the Count's orders were obeyed. In the mean time Dorothée was telling of a door, that opened from a gallery, leading from the great ſtair-caſe into the laſt anti-room of the ſaloon, and, this being much nearer to the bed chamber, it appeared probable that Ludovico might be eaſily awakened by an attempt to open it. Thither, therefore, the Count went, but his voice was as ineffectual at this door as it had proved at the remoter one; and now, ſeriouſly intereſted for Ludovico, he was himſelf going to ſtrike upon the door with the inſtrument, when he obſerved its ſingular beauty, and with-held the blow. It appeared, on the firſt glance,

to

to be of ebony, ſo dark and cloſe was its grain and ſo high its poliſh; but it proved to be only of larch wood, of the growth of Provence, then famous for its foreſts of larch. The beauty of its poliſhed hue and of its delicate carvings determined the Count to ſpare this door, and he returned to that leading from the back ſtair-caſe, which being, at length, forced, he entered the firſt anti-room, followed by Henri and a few of the moſt courageous of his ſervants, the reſt awaiting the event of the enquiry on the ſtairs and landing-place.

All was ſilent in the chambers, through which the Count paſſed, and, having reached the ſaloon, he called loudly upon Ludovico; after which, ſtill receiving no anſwer, he threw open the door of the bed-room, and entered.

The profound ſtillneſs within confirmed his apprehenſions for Ludovico, for not even the breathings of a perſon in ſleep were heard; and his uncertainty was not ſoon ter-

minated, ſince, the ſhutters being all cloſed, the chamber was too dark for any object to be diſtinguiſhed in it.

The Count bade a ſervant open them, who, as he croſſed the room to do ſo, ſtumbled over ſomething, and fell to the floor, when his cry occaſioned ſuch panic among the few of his fellows, who had ventured thus far, that they inſtantly fled, and the Count and Henri were left to finiſh the adventure.

Henri then ſprung acroſs the room, and, opening a window-ſhutter, they perceived, that the man had fallen over a chair near the hearth, in which Ludovico had been ſitting;—for he ſat there no longer, nor could any where be ſeen by the imperfect light that was admitted into the apartment. The Count, ſeriouſly alarmed, now opened other ſhutters, that he might be enabled to examine further, and, Ludovico not yet appearing, he ſtood for a moment, ſuſpended in aſtoniſhment, and ſcarcely truſting his ſenſes, till, his eyes glancing on the bed, he advanced

advanced to examine whether he was there asleep. No person, however, was in it, and he proceeded to the oriel, where every thing remained as on the preceding night, but Ludovico was no where to be found.

The Count now checked his amazement, considering, that Ludovico might have left the chambers, during the night, overcome by the terrors, which their lonely desolation and the recollected reports, concerning them, had inspired. Yet, if this had been the fact, the man would naturally have sought society, and his fellow servants had all declared they had not seen him; the door of the outer room also had been found fastened, with the key on the inside; it was impossible, therefore, for him to have passed through that, and all the outer doors of this suite were found, on examination, to be bolted and locked, with the keys also within them. The Count, being then compelled to believe, that the lad had escaped through the casements, next examined them; but such as opened wide

enough to admit the body of a man were found to be carefully ſecured either by iron bars, or by ſhutters, and no veſtige appeared of any perſon having attempted to paſs them; neither was it probable, that Ludovico would have incurred the riſque of breaking his neck, by leaping from a window, when he might have walked ſafely through a door.

The Count's amazement did not admit of words; but he returned once more to examine the bed-room, where was no appearance of diſorder, except that occaſioned by the late overthrow of the chair, near which had ſtood a ſmall table, and on this Ludovico's ſword, his lamp, the book he had been reading, and the remnant of his flaſk of wine ſtill remained. At the foot of the table, too, was the baſket with ſome fragments of proviſion and wood.

Henri and the ſervant now uttered their aſtoniſhment without reſerve, and, though the Count ſaid little, there was a ſerioufneſs in his manner that expreſſed much. It appeared,

peared, that Ludovico muſt have quitted theſe rooms by ſome concealed paſſage, for the Count could not believe, that any ſupernatural means had occaſioned this event; yet, if there was any ſuch paſſage, it ſeemed inexplicable why he ſhould retreat through it, and it was equally ſurpriſing, that not even the ſmalleſt veſtige ſhould appear, by which his progreſs could be traced. In the rooms every thing remained as much in order as if he had juſt walked out by the common way.

The Count himſelf aſſiſted in lifting the arras, with which the bed-chamber, ſaloon and one of the anti-rooms were hung, that he might diſcover if any door had been concealed behind it; but, after a laborious ſearch, none was found, and he, at length, quitted the apartments, having ſecured the door of the laſt anti-chamber, the key of which he took into his own poſſeſſion. He then gave orders, that ſtrict ſearch ſhould be made for Ludovico not only in the chateau, but in the neighbourhood, and, retiring

ing with Henri to his cloſet, they remained there in converſation for a conſiderable time; and whatever was the ſubject of it, Henri from this hour loſt much of his vivacity, and his manners were particularly grave and reſerved, whenever the topic, which now agitated the Count's family with wonder and alarm, was introduced.

On the diſappearing of Ludovico, Baron St. Foix ſeemed ſtrengthened in all his former opinions concerning the probability of apparitions, though it was difficult to diſcover what connection there could poſſibly be between the two ſubjects, or to account for this effect otherwiſe than by ſuppoſing, that the myſtery attending Ludovico, by exciting awe and curioſity, reduced the mind to a ſtate of ſenſibility, which rendered it more liable to the influence of ſuperſtition in general. It is, however, certain, that from this period the Baron and his adherents became more bigoted to their own ſyſtems than before, while the terrors of the Count's ſervants increaſed to an exceſs, that

that occaſioned many of them to quit the manſion immediately, and the reſt remained only till others could be procured to ſupply their places.

The moſt ſtrenuous ſearch after Ludovico proved unſucceſsful, and, after ſeveral days of indefatigable enquiry, poor Annette gave herſelf up to deſpair, and the other inhabitants of the chateau to amazement.

Emily, whoſe mind had been deeply affected by the diſaſtrous fate of the late Marchioneſs and with the myſterious connection, which ſhe fancied had exiſted between her and St. Aubert, was particularly impreſſed by the late extraordinary event, and much concerned for the loſs of Ludovico, whoſe integrity and faithful ſervices claimed both her eſteem and gratitude. She was now very deſirous to return to the quiet retirement of her convent, but every hint of this was received with real ſorrow by the Lady Blanche, and affectionately ſet aſide by the Count, for whom ſhe felt much of

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the reſpectful love and admiration of a daughter, and to whom, by Dorothée's conſent, ſhe, at length, mentioned the appearance, which they had witneſſed in the chamber of the deceaſed Marchioneſs. At any other period, he would have ſmiled at ſuch a relation, and have believed, that its object had exiſted only in the diſtempered fancy of the relater; but he now attended to Emily with ſerioufneſs, and, when ſhe concluded, requeſted of her a promiſe, that this occurrence ſhould reſt in ſilence. "Whatever may be the cauſe and the import of theſe extraordinary occurrences," added the Count, "time only can explain them. I ſhall keep a wary eye upon all that paſſes in the chateau, and ſhall purſue every poſſible means of diſcovering the fate of Ludovico. Meanwhile, we muſt be prudent and be ſilent. I will myſelf watch in the north chambers, but of this we will ſay nothing, till the night arrives, when I purpoſe doing ſo."

The Count then ſent for Dorothée, and required

required of her alſo a promiſe of ſilence, concerning what ſhe had already, or might in future witneſs of an extraordinary nature; and this ancient ſervant now related to him the particulars of the Marchioneſs de Villeroi's death, with ſome of which he appeared to be already acquainted, while by others he was evidently ſurpriſed and agitated. After liſtening to this narrative, the Count retired to his cloſet, where he remained alone for ſeveral hours; and, when he again appeared, the ſolemnity of his manner ſurpriſed and alarmed Emily, but ſhe gave no utterance to her thoughts.

On the week following the diſappearance of Ludovico, all the Count's gueſts took leave of him, except the Baron, his ſon Monſ. St. Foix, and Emily: the latter of whom was ſoon after embarraſſed and diſtreſſed by the arrival of another viſitor, Monſ. Du Pont, which made her determine upon withdrawing to her convent immediately. The delight, that appeared in his countenance, when he met her, told that

that he brought back the ſame ardour of paſſion, which had formerly baniſhed him from Chateau-le-Blanc. He was received with reſerve by Emily, and with pleaſure by the Count, who preſented him to her with a ſmile, that ſeemed intended to plead his cauſe, and who did not hope the leſs for his friend, from the embarraſſment ſhe betrayed.

But M. Du Pont, with truer ſympathy, ſeemed to underſtand her manner, and his countenance quickly loſt its vivacity, and ſunk into the languor of deſpondency.

On the following day, however, he ſought an opportunity of declaring the purport of his viſit, and renewed his ſuit; a declaration, which was received with real concern by Emily, who endeavoured to leſſen the pain ſhe might inflict by a ſecond rejection, with aſſurances of eſteem and friendſhip; yet ſhe left him in a ſtate of mind, that claimed and excited her tendereſt compaſſion; and, being more ſenſible than ever of the impropriety of remaining longer at the

chateau,

chateau, ſhe immediately ſought the Count, and communicated to him her intention of returning to the convent.

"My dear Emily," ſaid he, "I obſerve, with extreme concern, the illuſion you are encouraging—an illuſion common to young and ſenſible minds. Your heart has received a ſevere ſhock; you believe you can never entirely recover it, and you will encourage this belief, till the habit of indulging ſorrow will ſubdue the ſtrength of your mind, and diſcolour your future views with melancholy regret. Let me diſſipate this illuſion, and awaken you to a ſenſe of your danger."

Emily ſmiled mournfully. "I know what you would ſay, my dear ſir," ſaid ſhe, "and am prepared to anſwer you. I feel, that my heart can never know a ſecond affection; and that I muſt never hope even to recover its tranquillity—if I ſuffer myſelf to enter into a ſecond engagement."

"I know, that you feel all this," replied the Count; "and I know, alſo, that time will

will overcome theſe feelings, unleſs you cheriſh them in ſolitude, and, pardon me, with romantic tenderneſs. Then, indeed, time will only confirm habit. I am particularly empowered to ſpeak on this ſubject, and to ſympathize in your ſufferings," added the Count, with an air of ſolemnity, "for I have known what it is to love, and to lament the object of my love. Yes," continued he, while his eyes filled with tears, "I have ſuffered!—but thoſe times have paſſed away—long paſſed! and I can now look back upon them without emotion."

"My dear ſir," ſaid Emily, timidly, "what mean thoſe tears?—they ſpeak, I fear, another language—they plead for me."

"They are weak tears, for they are uſeleſs ones," replied the Count, drying them, "I would have you ſuperior to ſuch weakneſs. Theſe, however, are only faint traces of a grief, which, if it had not been oppoſed by long continued effort, might have led me to the verge of madneſs! Judge, then, whether I have not cauſe to warn you of

of an indulgence, which may produce ſo terrible an effect, and which muſt certainly, if not oppoſed, overcloud the years, that otherwiſe might be happy. M. Du Pont is a ſenſible and amiable man, who has long been tenderly attached to you; his family and fortune are unexceptionable;—after what I have ſaid, it is unneceſſary to add, that I ſhould rejoice in your felicity, and that I think M. Du Pont would promote it. Do not weep, Emily," continued the Count, taking her hand, "there *is* happineſs reſerved for you."

He was ſilent a moment; and then added, in a firmer voice, "I do not wiſh, that you ſhould make a violent effort to overcome your feelings; all I, at preſent, aſk, is, that you will check the thoughts, that would lead you to a remembrance of the paſt; that you will ſuffer your mind to be engaged by preſent objects; that you will allow yourſelf to believe it poſſible you may yet be happy; and that you will ſometimes think with complacency of poor Du Pont,

Pont, and not condemn him to the ſtate of deſpondency, from which, my dear Emily, I am endeavouring to withdraw you."

"Ah! my dear ſir," ſaid Emily, while her tears ſtill fell, "do not ſuffer the benevolence of your wiſhes to miſlead Monſ. Du Pont with an expectation that I can ever accept his hand. If I underſtand my own heart, this never can be; your inſtruction I can obey in almoſt every other particular, than that of adopting a contrary belief."

"Leave me to underſtand your heart," replied the Count, with a faint ſmile. "If you pay me the compliment to be guided by my advice in other inſtances, I will pardon your incredulity, reſpecting your future conduct towards Monſ. Du Pont. I will not even preſs you to remain longer at the chateau than your own ſatisfaction will permit; but though I forbear to oppoſe your preſent retirement, I ſhall urge the claims of friendſhip for your future viſits."

Tears of gratitude mingled with thoſe of tender regret, while Emily thanked the Count

Count for the many inſtances of friendſhip ſhe had received from him; promiſed to be directed by his advice upon every ſubject but one, and aſſured him of the pleaſure, with which ſhe ſhould, at ſome future period, accept the invitation of the Counteſs and himſelf—if Monſ. Du Pont was not at the chateau.

The Count ſmiled at this condition. "Be it ſo," ſaid he, "meanwhile the convent is ſo near the chateau, that my daughter and I ſhall often viſit you; and if, ſometimes, we ſhould dare to bring you another viſitor —will you forgive us?"

Emily looked diſtreſſed, and remained ſilent.

"Well," rejoined the Count, "I will purſue this ſubject no further, and muſt now entreat your forgiveneſs for having preſſed it thus far. You will, however, do me the juſtice to believe, that I have been urged only by a ſincere regard for your happineſs, and that of my amiable friend Monſ. Du Pont.

Emily, when she left the Count, went to mention her intended departure to the Countess, who opposed it with polite expressions of regret; after which, she sent a note to acquaint the lady abbess, that she should return to the convent; and thither she withdrew on the evening of the following day. M. Du Pont, in extreme regret, saw her depart, while the Count endeavoured to cheer him with a hope, that Emily would sometimes regard him with a more favourable eye.

She was pleased to find herself once more in the tranquil retirement of the convent, where she experienced a renewal of all the maternal kindness of the abbess, and of the sisterly attentions of the nuns. A report of the late extraordinary occurrence at the chateau had already reached them, and, after supper, on the evening of her arrival, it was the subject of conversation in the convent parlour, where she was requested to mention some particulars of that unaccountable event. Emily was guarded in her conversation,

ſation on this ſubject, and briefly related a few circumſtances concerning Ludovico, whoſe diſappearance, her auditors almoſt unanimouſly agreed, had been effected by ſupernatural means.

"A belief had ſo long prevailed," ſaid a nun, who was called ſiſter Frances, "that the chateau was haunted, that I was ſurpriſed, when I heard the Count had the temerity to inhabit it. Its former poſſeſſor, I fear, had ſome deed of conſcience to atone for; let us hope that the virtues of its preſent owner will preſerve him from the puniſhment due to the errors of the laſt, if, indeed, he was criminal."

"Of what crime, then, was he ſuſpected?" ſaid a Mademoiſelle Feydeau, a boarder at the convent.

"Let us pray for his ſoul!" ſaid a nun, who had till now ſat in ſilent attention. "If he was criminal, his puniſhment in this world was ſufficient."

There was a mixture of wildneſs and ſolemnity in her manner of delivering this,

which ſtruck Emily exceedingly; but Mademoiſelle repeated her queſtion, without noticing the ſolemn eagerneſs of the nun.

"I dare not preſume to ſay what was his crime," replied ſiſter Frances; "but I have heard many reports of an extraordinary nature, reſpecting the late Marquis de Villeroi, and among others, that, ſoon after the death of his lady, he quitted Chateau-le-Blanc, and never afterwards returned to it. I was not here at the time, ſo I can only mention it from report, and ſo many years have paſſed ſince the Marchioneſs died, that few of our ſiſterhood, I believe, can do more."

"But I can," ſaid the nun, who had before ſpoken, and whom they called ſiſter Agnes.

"You then," ſaid Mademoiſelle Feydeau, "are poſſibly acquainted with circumſtances, that enable you to judge, whether he was criminal or not, and what was the crime imputed to him."

"I am," replied the nun; "but who ſhall dare to ſcrutinize my thoughts—who ſhall

ſhall dare to pluck out my opinion? God only is his judge, and to that judge he is gone!"

Emily looked with ſurpriſe at ſiſter Frances, who returned her a ſignificant glance.

"I only requeſted your opinion," ſaid Mademoiſelle Feydeau, mildly; "if the ſubject is diſpleaſing to you, I will drop it."

"Diſpleaſing!"—ſaid the nun, with emphaſis.—"We are idle talkers; we do not weigh the meaning of the words we uſe; *diſpleaſing* is a poor word. I will go pray." As ſhe ſaid this ſhe roſe from her ſeat, and with a profound ſigh quitted the room.

"What can be the meaning of this?" ſaid Emily, when ſhe was gone.

"It is nothing extraordinary," replied ſiſter Frances, "ſhe is often thus; but ſhe has no meaning in what ſhe ſays. Her intellects are at times deranged. Did you never ſee her thus before?"

"Never," ſaid Emily. "I have, indeed, ſometimes, thought, that there was the me-

lancholy of madneſs in her look, but never before perceived it in her ſpeech. Poor ſoul, I will pray for her!"

"Your prayers then, my daughter, will unite with ours," obſerved the lady abbeſs, "ſhe has need of them."

"Dear lady," ſaid Mademoiſelle Feydeau, addreſſing the abbeſs, "what is your opinion of the late Marquis? The ſtrange circumſtances, that have occurred at the chateau, have ſo much awakened my curioſity, that I ſhall be pardoned the queſtion. What was his imputed crime, and what the puniſhment, to which ſiſter Agnes alluded?"

"We muſt be cautious of advancing our opinion," ſaid the abbeſs, with an air of reſerve, mingled with ſolemnity, "we muſt be cautious of advancing our opinion on ſo delicate a ſubject. I will not take upon me to pronounce, that the late Marquis was criminal, or to ſay what was the crime of which he was ſuſpected; but, concerning the puniſhment our daughter Agnes hinted,

I know

I know of none he ſuffered. She probably alluded to the ſevere one, which an exaſperated conſcience can inflict. Beware, my children, of incurring ſo terrible a puniſhment—it is the purgatory of this life! The late Marchioneſs I knew well; ſhe was a pattern to ſuch as live in the world; nay, our ſacred order need not have bluſhed to copy her virtues! Our holy convent received her mortal part; her heavenly ſpirit, I doubt not, aſcended to its ſanctuary!"

As the abbeſs ſpoke this, the laſt bell of veſpers ſtruck up, and ſhe roſe. "Let us go, my children," ſaid ſhe, "and intercede for the wretched; let us go and confeſs our ſins, and endeavour to purify our ſouls for the heaven to which *ſhe* is gone!"

Emily was affected by the ſolemnity of this exhortation, and, remembering her father, "The heaven, to which *he*, too, is gone!" ſaid ſhe, faintly, as ſhe ſuppreſſed her ſighs, and followed the abbeſs and the nuns to the chapel.

CHAP. VIII.

" Be thou a ſpirit of health, or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blaſts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,
. . . . . .
. . . . I will ſpeak to thee." . . . .

HAMLET.

COUNT DE VILLEFORT, at length, received a letter from the advocate at Avignon, encouraging Emily to aſſert her claim to the eſtates of the late Madame Montoni; and, about the ſame time, a meſſenger arrived from Monſieur Queſnel with intelligence, that made an appeal to the law on this ſubject unneceſſary, ſince it appeared, that the only perſon, who could have oppoſed her claim, was now no more. A friend of M. Queſnel, who reſided at Venice, had ſent him an account of the death of Montoni, who had been brought to trial with Orſino, as his ſuppoſed accomplice in the murder of the Venetian nobleman. Orſino was found

found guilty, condemned and executed upon the wheel, but, nothing being discovered to criminate Montoni, and his colleagues, on this charge, they were all released, except Montoni, who, being considered by the senate as a very dangerous person, was, for other reasons, ordered again into confinement, where, it was said, he had died in a doubtful and mysterious manner, and not without suspicion of having been poisoned. The authority, from which M. Quesnel had received this information, would not allow him to doubt its truth, and he told Emily, that she had now only to lay claim to the estates of her late aunt, to secure them, and added, that he would himself assist in the necessary forms of this business. The term, for which LaVallée had been let, being now also nearly expired, he acquainted her with the circumstance, and advised her to take the road thither, through Tholouse, where he promised to meet her, and where it would be proper for her to take possession of the estates of the late Madame Montoni;

toni; adding, that he would ſpare her any difficulties, that might occur on that occaſion from the want of knowledge on the ſubject, and that he believed it would be neceſſary for her to be at Tholouſe, in about three weeks from the preſent time.

An increaſe of fortune ſeemed to have awakened this ſudden kindneſs in M. Queſnel towards his niece, and it appeared, that he entertained more reſpect for the rich heireſs, than he had ever felt compaſſion for the poor and unfriended orphan.

The pleaſure, with which ſhe received this intelligence, was clouded when ſhe conſidered, that he, for whoſe ſake ſhe had once regretted the want of fortune, was no longer worthy of ſharing it with her; but, remembering the friendly admonition of the Count, ſhe checked this melancholy reflection, and endeavoured to feel only gratitude for the unexpected good, that now attended her; while it formed no inconſiderable part of her ſatisfaction to know, that La Vallée, her native home, which was endeared to her by its having

having been the reſidence of her parents, would ſoon be reſtored to her poſſeſſion. There ſhe meant to fix her future reſidence, for, though it could not be compared with the chateau at Tholouſe, either for extent, or magnificence, its pleaſant ſcenes, and the tender remembrances that haunted them, had claims upon her heart, which ſhe was not inclined to ſacrifice to oſtentation. She wrote immediately to thank M. Queſnel for the active intereſt he took in her concerns, and to ſay that ſhe would meet him at Tholouſe at the appointed time.

When Count de Villefort, with Blanche, came to the convent to give Emily the advice of the advocate, he was informed of the contents of M. Queſnel's letter, and gave her his ſincere congratulations on the occaſion; but ſhe obſerved, that, when the firſt expreſſion of ſatisfaction had faded from his countenance, an unuſual gravity ſucceeded, and ſhe ſcarcely heſitated to enquire its cauſe.

"It has no new occaſion," replied the

Count; "I am haraſſed and perplexed by the confuſion into which my family is thrown by their fooliſh ſuperſtition. Idle reports are floating round me, which I can neither admit to be true, or prove to be falſe; and I am, alſo, very anxious about the poor fellow, Ludovico, concerning whom I have not been able to obtain information. Every part of the chateau, and every part of the neighbourhood, too, has, I believe, been ſearched, and I know not what further can be done, ſince I have already offered large rewards for the diſcovery of him. The keys of the north apartment I have not ſuffered to be out of my poſſeſſion, ſince he diſappeared, and I mean to watch in thoſe chambers, myſelf, this very night."

Emily, ſeriouſly alarmed for the Count, united her entreaties with thoſe of the Lady Blanche, to diſſuade him from his purpoſe.

"What ſhould I fear?" ſaid he. "I have no faith in ſupernatural combats, and for human oppoſition I ſhall be prepared; nay,

nay; I will even promiſe not to watch alone."

"But who, dear ſir, will have courage enough to watch with you?" ſaid Emily.

"My ſon," replied the Count. "If I am not carried off in the night," added he, ſmiling, "you ſhall hear the reſult of my adventure, to-morrow."

The Count and Lady Blanche, ſhortly afterwards, took leave of Emily, and returned to the chateau, where he informed Henri of his intention, who, not without ſome ſecret reluctance, conſented to be the partner of his watch; and, when the deſign was mentioned after ſupper, the Counteſs was terrified, and the Baron, and M. Du Pont joined with her in entreating, that he would not tempt his fate, as Ludovico had done. "We know not," added the Baron, "the nature, or the power of an evil ſpirit; and that ſuch a ſpirit haunts thoſe chambers can now, I think, ſcarcely be doubted. Beware, my lord, how you provoke its vengeance, ſince it has already

given us one terrible example of its malice. I allow it may be probable, that the ſpirits of the dead are permitted to return to the earth only on occaſions of high import; but the preſent import may be your deſtruction."

The Count could not forbear ſmiling; "Do you think then, Baron," ſaid he, "that my deſtruction is of ſufficient importance to draw back to earth the ſoul of the departed? Alas! my good friend, there is no occaſion for ſuch means to accompliſh the deſtruction of any individual. Wherever the myſtery reſts, I truſt I ſhall, this night, be able to detect it. You know I am not ſuperſtitious."

"I know that you are incredulous," interrupted the Baron.

"Well, call it what you will, I meant to ſay, that, though you know I am free from ſuperſtition—if any thing ſupernatural has appeared, I doubt not it will appear to me; and if any ſtrange event hangs over my houſe, or if any extraordinary tranſaction has

has formerly been connected with it, I ſhall probably be made acquainted with it. At all events I will invite diſcovery; and, that I may be equal to a mortal attack, which in good truth, my friend, is what I moſt expect, I ſhall take care to be well armed."

The Count took leave of his family, for the night, with an aſſumed gaiety, which but ill concealed the anxiety that depreſſed his ſpirits, and retired to the north apartments, accompanied by his ſon, and followed by the Baron, M. Du Pont and ſome of the domeſtics, who all bade him good night at the outer door. In theſe chambers every thing appeared as when he had laſt been here; even in the bed-room no alteration was viſible, where he lighted his own fire, for none of the domeſtics could be prevailed upon to venture thither. After carefully examining the chamber and the oriel, the Count and Henri drew their chairs upon the hearth, ſet a bottle of wine and a lamp before them, laid their ſwords upon the table, and, ſtirring the wood into a blaze, began to converſe

verſe on indifferent topics. But Henri was often ſilent and abſtracted, and ſometimes threw a glance of mingled awe and curioſity round the gloomy apartment; while the Count gradually ceaſed to converſe, and ſat either loſt in thought, or reading a volume of Tacitus, which he had brought to beguile the tedioufneſs of the night.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

" Give thy thoughts no tongue."

SHAKESPEARE.

THE Baron St. Foix, whom anxiety for his friend had kept awake, roſe early to enquire the event of the night, when, as he paſſed the Count's cloſet, hearing ſteps within, he knocked at the door, and it was opened by his friend himſelf. Rejoicing to ſee him in ſafety, and curious to learn the occurrences of the night, he had not immediately leiſure to obſerve the unuſual gravity that overſpread the features of the Count, whoſe reſerved anſwers firſt occaſioned him to notice it. The Count, then ſmiling, endeavoured to treat the ſubject of his curioſity with levity; but the Baron was ſerious, and purſued his enquiries ſo cloſely, that the Count, at length, reſuming his gravity, ſaid, " Well, my friend, preſs the ſubject no further, I entreat you; and let me requeſt

queſt alſo, that you will hereafter be ſilent upon any thing you may think extraordinary in my future conduct. I do not ſcruple to tell you, that I am unhappy, and that the watch of the laſt night has not aſſiſted me to diſcover Ludovico; upon every occurrence of the night you muſt excuſe my reſerve."

"But where is Henri?" ſaid the Baron, with ſurpriſe and diſappointment at this denial.

"He is well in his own apartment," replied the Count. "You will not queſtion him on this topic, my friend, ſince you know my wiſh."

"Certainly not," ſaid the Baron, ſomewhat chagrined, "ſince it would be diſpleaſing to you; but methinks, my friend, you might rely on my diſcretion, and drop this unuſual reſerve. However, you muſt allow me to ſuſpect, that you have ſeen reaſon to become a convert to my ſyſtem, and are no longer the incredulous knight you lately appeared to be."

"Let

"Let us talk no more upon this ſubject," ſaid the Count; "you may be aſſured, that no ordinary circumſtance has impoſed this ſilence upon me towards a friend, whom I have called ſo for near thirty years; and my preſent reſerve cannot make you queſtion either my eſteem, or the ſincerity of my friendſhip."

"I will not doubt either," ſaid the Baron, "though you muſt allow me to expreſs my ſurpriſe, at this ſilence."

"To me I will allow it," replied the Count, "but I earneſtly entreat that you will forbear to notice it to my family, as well as every thing remarkable you may obſerve in my conduct towards them."

The Baron readily promiſed this, and, after converſing for ſome time on general topics, they deſcended to the breakfaſt-room, where the Count met his family with a cheerful countenance, and evaded their enquiries by employing light ridicule, and aſſuming an air of uncommon gaiety, while he aſſured them, that they need not apprehend

hend any thing from the north chambers, ſince Henri and himſelf had been permitted to return from them in ſafety.

Henri, however, was leſs ſucceſsful in diſguiſing his feelings. From his countenance an expreſſion of terror was not entirely faded; he was often ſilent and thoughtful, and, when he attempted to laugh at the eager enquiries of Mademoiſelle Bearn, it was evidently only an attempt.

In the evening, the Count called, as he had promiſed, at the convent, and Emily was ſurpriſed to perceive a mixture of playful ridicule and of reſerve in his mention of the north apartment. Of what had occurred there, however, he ſaid nothing, and, when ſhe ventured to remind him of his promiſe to tell her the reſult of his enquiries, and to aſk if he had received any proof that thoſe chambers were haunted, his look became ſolemn, for a moment, then, ſeeming to recollect himſelf, he ſmiled, and ſaid, "My dear Emily, do not ſuffer my lady abbeſs to infect your good underſtanding

with

with theſe fancies; ſhe will teach you to expect a ghoſt in every dark room. But believe me," added he, with a profound ſigh, "the apparition of the dead comes not on light, or ſportive errands, to terrify, or to ſurpriſe the timid." He paused, and fell into a momentary thoughtfulneſs, and then added, "We will ſay no more on this ſubject."

Soon after, he took leave, and, when Emily joined ſome of the nuns, ſhe was ſurpriſed to find them acquainted with a circumſtance, which ſhe had carefully avoided to mention, and expreſſing their admiration of his intrepidity in having dared to paſs a night in the apartment, whence Ludovico had diſappeared; for ſhe had not conſidered with what rapidity a tale of wonder circulates. The nuns had acquired their information from peaſants, who brought fruit to the monaſtery, and whoſe whole attention had been fixed, ſince the diſappearance of Ludovico, on what was paſſing in the caſtle.

Emily

Emily liſtened in ſilence to the various opinions of the nuns, concerning the conduct of the Count, moſt of whom condemned it as raſh and preſumptuous, affirming, that it was provoking the vengeance of an evil ſpirit, thus to intrude upon its haunts.

Siſter Frances contended, that the Count had acted with the bravery of a virtuous mind. He knew himſelf guiltleſs of aught that ſhould provoke a good ſpirit, and did not fear the ſpells of an evil one, ſince he could claim the protection of an higher Power, of Him, who can command the wicked, and will protect the innocent.

"The guilty cannot claim that protection!" ſaid ſiſter Agnes, "let the Count look to his conduct, that he do not forfeit his claim! Yet who is he, that ſhall dare to call himſelf innocent!—all earthly innocence is but comparative. Yet ſtill how wide aſunder are the extremes of guilt, and to what an horrible depth may we fall! Oh!——"

The nun, as ſhe concluded, uttered a ſhuddering

ſhuddering ſigh, that ſtartled Emily, who, looking up, perceived the eyes of Agnes fixed on hers; after which the ſiſter roſe, took her hand, gazed earneſtly upon her countenance, for ſome moments, in ſilence, and then ſaid,

"You are young—you are innocent! I mean you are yet innocent of any great crime!—But you have paſſions in your heart,—ſcorpions; they ſleep now—beware how you awaken them!—they will ſting you, even unto death!"

Emily, affected by theſe words, and by the ſolemnity with which they were delivered, could not ſuppreſs her tears.

"Ah! is it ſo?" exclaimed Agnes, her countenance ſoftening from its ſternneſs—"ſo young, and ſo unfortunate! We are ſiſters, then, indeed. Yet, there is no bond of kindneſs among the guilty," ſhe added, while her eyes reſumed their wild expreſſion, "no gentleneſs,—no peace, nó hope! I knew them all once—my eyes could weep—but now they burn, for now, my ſoul

ſoul is fixed, and fearleſs!—I lament no more!"

"Rather let us repent and pray," ſaid another nun. "We are taught to hope, that prayer and penitence will work our ſalvation. There is hope for all who repent!"

"Who repent and turn to the true faith," obſerved ſiſter Frances.

"For all but me!" replied Agnes ſolemnly, who pauſed, and then abruptly added, "My head burns, I believe I am not well. O! could I ſtrike from my memory all former ſcenes—the figures, that riſe up, like furies, to torment me!—I ſee them, when I ſleep, and, when I am awake, they are ſtill before my eyes! I ſee them now—now!"

She ſtood in a fixed attitude of horror, her ſtraining eyes moving ſlowly round the room, as if they followed ſomething. One of the nuns gently took her hand, to lead her from the parlour. Agnes became calm, drew her other hand acroſs her eyes, looked

again, and, ſighing deeply, ſaid, "They are gone—they are gone! I am feveriſh, I know not what I ſay. I am thus, ſometimes, but it will go off again, I ſhall ſoon be better. Was not that the veſper-bell?"

"No," replied Frances, "the evening ſervice is paſſed. Let Margaret lead you to your cell."

"You are right," replied ſiſter Agnes, "I ſhall be better there. Good night, my ſiſters; remember me in your oriſons!"

When they had withdrawn, Frances, obſerving Emily's emotion, ſaid, "Do not be alarmed, our ſiſter is often thus deranged, though I have not lately ſeen her ſo frantic; her uſual mood is melancholy. This fit has been coming on for ſeveral days; ſeclusion and the cuſtomary treatment will reſtore her."

"But how rationally ſhe converſed, at firſt!" obſerved Emily, "her ideas followed each other in perfect order."

"Yes," replied the nun, "this is nothing

thing new: nay, I have ſometimes known her argue not only with method, but with acuteneſs, and then, in a moment, ſtart off into madneſs."

"Her conſcience ſeems afflicted," ſaid Emily, "did you ever hear what circumſtance reduced her to this deplorable condition?"

"I have," replied the nun, who ſaid no more till Emily repeated the queſtion, when ſhe added in a low voice, and looking ſignificantly towards the other boarders, "I cannot tell you now, but, if you think it worth your while, come to my cell to-night, when our ſiſterhood are at reſt, and you ſhall hear more; but remember we riſe to midnight prayers, and come either before, or after midnight."

Emily promiſed to remember, and, the abbeſs ſoon after appearing, they ſpoke no more of the unhappy nun.

The Count, meanwhile, on his return home, had found M. Du Pont in one of thoſe fits of deſpondency, which his attachment

ment to Emily frequently occaſioned him, an attachment, that had ſubſiſted too long to be eaſily ſubdued, and which had already outlived the oppoſition of his friends. M. Du Pont had firſt ſeen Emily in Gaſcony, during the lifetime of his parent, who, on diſcovering his ſon's partiality for mademoiſelle St. Aubert, his inferior in point of fortune, forbade him to declare it to her family, or to think of her more. During the life of his father, he had obſerved the firſt command, but had found it impracticable to obey the ſecond, and had, ſometimes, ſoothed his paſſion by viſiting her favourite haunts, among which was the fiſhing-houſe, where, once or twice, he addreſſed her in verſe, concealing his name, in obedience to the promiſe he had given his father. There too he played the pathetic air, to which ſhe had liſtened with ſuch ſurpriſe and admiration; and there he found the miniature, that had ſince cheriſhed a paſſion fatal to his repoſe. During this expedition into Italy, his

father died; but he received his liberty at a moment, when he was the leaſt enabled to profit by it, ſince the object, that rendered it moſt valuable, was no longer within the reach of his vows. By what accident he diſcovered Emily, and aſſiſted to releaſe her from a terrible impriſonment, has already appeared, and alſo the unavailing hope, with which he then encouraged his love, and the fruitleſs efforts, that he had ſince made to overcome it.

The Count ſtill endeavoured, with friendly zeal, to ſooth him with a belief, that patience, perſeverance and prudence would finally obtain for him happineſs and Emily: "Time," ſaid he, "will wear away the melancholy impreſſion, which diſappointment has left on her mind, and ſhe will be ſenſible of your merit. Your ſervices have already awakened her gratitude, and your ſufferings her pity; and truſt me, my friend, in a heart ſo ſenſible as hers, gratitude and pity lead to love. When her imagination

imagination is rescued from its present delusion, she will readily accept the homage of a mind like yours."

Du Pont sighed, while he listened to these words; and, endeavouring to hope what his friend believed, he willingly yielded to an invitation to prolong his visit at the chateau, which we now leave for the monastery of St. Claire.

When the nuns had retired to rest, Emily stole to her appointment with sister Frances, whom she found in her cell, engaged in prayer, before a little table, where appeared the image she was addressing, and, above, the dim lamp, that gave light to the place. Turning her eyes, as the door opened, she beckoned to Emily to come in, who, having done so, seated herself in silence beside the nun's little mattress of straw, till her orisons should conclude. The latter soon rose from her knees, and, taking down the lamp and placing it on the table, Emily perceived there a human scull and bones, lying beside an hour-glass; but the nun, without observing

her emotion, ſat down on the mattreſs by her, ſaying, " Your curioſity, ſiſter, has made you punctual, but you have nothing remarkable to hear in the hiſtory of poor Agnes, of whom I avoided to ſpeak in the preſence of my lay-ſiſters, only becauſe I would not publiſh her crime to them."

" I ſhall conſider your confidence in me as a favour," ſaid Emily, " and will not miſuſe it."

" Siſter Agnes," reſumed the nun, " is of a noble family, as the dignity of her air muſt already have informed you, but I will not diſhonour their name ſo much as to reveal it. Love was the occaſion of her crime and of her madneſs. She was beloved by a gentleman of inferior fortune, and her father, as I have heard, beſtowing her on a nobleman, whom ſhe diſliked, an ill-governed paſſion proved her deſtruction.—Every obligation of virtue and of duty was forgotten, and ſhe prophaned her marriage vows; but her guilt was ſoon detected, and ſhe would have fallen a ſacrifice to the vengeance

gearice of her husband, had not her father contrived to convey her from his power. By what means he did this, I never could learn; but he secreted her in this convent, where he afterwards prevailed with her to take the veil, while a report was circulated in the world, that she was dead, and the father, to save his daughter, assisted the rumour, and employed such means as induced her husband to believe she had become a victim to his jealousy. You look surprised," added the nun, observing Emily's countenance; "I allow the story is uncommon, but not, I believe, without a parallel."

"Pray proceed," said Emily, "I am interested."

"The story is already told," resumed the nun, "I have only to mention, that the long struggle, which Agnes suffered, between love, remorse and a sense of the duties she had taken upon herself in becoming of our order, at length unsettled her reason. At first, she was frantic and melancholy by quick alternatives; then, she sunk into a

deep and ſettled melancholy, which ſtill, however, has, at times, been interrupted by fits of wildneſs, and, of late, theſe have again been frequent."

Emily was affected by the hiſtory of the ſiſter, ſome parts of whoſe ſtory brought to her remembrance that of the Marchioneſs de Villeroi, who had alſo been compelled by her father to forſake the object of her affections, for a nobleman of his choice; but, from what Dorothée had related, there appeared no reaſon to ſuppoſe, that ſhe had eſcaped the vengeance of a jealous huſband, or to doubt for a moment the innocence of her conduct. But Emily, while ſhe ſighed over the miſery of the nun, could not forbear ſhedding a few tears to the misfortunes of the Marchioneſs; and, when ſhe returned to the mention of ſiſter Agnes, ſhe aſked Frances if ſhe remembered her in her youth, and whether ſhe was then beautiful.

"I was not here at the time, when ſhe took the vows," replied Frances, "which is ſo long ago, that few of the preſent ſiſterhood,

hood, I believe, were witneſſes of the ceremony; nay, even our lady mother did not then preſide over the convent: but I can remember, when ſiſter Agnes was a very beautiful woman. She retains that air of high rank, which always diſtinguiſhed her, but her beauty, you muſt perceive, is fled; I can ſcarcely diſcover even a veſtige of the lovelineſs, that once animated her features."

"It is ſtrange," ſaid Emily, "but there are moments, when her countenance has appeared familiar to my memory! You will think me fanciful, and I think myſelf ſo, for I certainly never ſaw ſiſter Agnes, before I came to this convent, and I muſt, therefore, have ſeen ſome perſon, whom ſhe ſtrongly reſembles, though of this I have no recollection."

"You have been intereſted by the deep melancholy of her countenance," ſaid Frances, "and its impreſſion has probably deluded your imagination; for I might as reaſonably think I perceive a likeneſs between you and Agnes, as you, that you have ſeen

her any where but in this convent, ſince this has been her place of refuge, for nearly as many years as make your age."

"Indeed!" ſaid Emily.

"Yes," rejoined Frances, "and why does that circumſtance excite your ſurpriſe?"

Emily did not appear to notice this queſtion, but remained thoughtful, for a few moments, and then ſaid, "It was about that ſame period that the Marchioneſs de Villeroi expired."

"That is an odd remark," ſaid Frances.

Emily, recalled from her reverie, ſmiled, and gave the converſation another turn, but it ſoon came back to the ſubject of the unhappy nun, and Emily remained in the cell of ſiſter Frances, till the mid-night bell aroufed her; when, apologizing for having interrupted the ſiſter's repoſe, till this late hour, they quitted the cell together. Emily returned to her chamber, and the nun, bearing a glimmering taper, went to her devotion in the chapel.

Several

Several days followed, during which Emily saw neither the Count, or any of his family; and, when, at length, he appeared, she remarked, with concern, that his air was unusually disturbed.

"My spirits are harassed," said he, in answer to her anxious enquiries, "and I mean to change my residence, for a little while, an experiment, which, I hope, will restore my mind to its usual tranquillity. My daughter and myself will accompany the Baron St. Foix to his chateau. It lies in a valley of the Pyrenées, that opens towards Gascony, and I have been thinking, Emily, that when you set out for La Vallée, we may go part of the way together; it would be a satisfaction to me to guard you towards your home."

She thanked the Count for his friendly consideration, and lamented, that the necessity for her going first to Tholouse would render this plan impracticable. "But, when you are at the Baron's resid[illegible]" she added, "you will be only a short journey from La

Vallée, and I think, ſir, you will not leave the country without viſiting me; it is unneceſſary to ſay with what pleaſure I ſhould receive you and the Lady Blanche."

"I do not doubt it," replied the Count, "and I will not deny myſelf and Blanche the pleaſure of viſiting you, if your affairs ſhould allow you to be at La Vallée, about the time when we can meet you there."

When Emily ſaid that ſhe ſhould hope to ſee the Counteſs alſo, ſhe was not ſorry to learn that this lady was going, accompanied by Mademoiſelle Bearn, to pay a viſit, for a few weeks, to a family in lower Languedoc.

The Count, after ſome further converſation on his intended journey and on the arrangement of Emily's, took leave; and many days did not ſucceed this viſit, before a ſecond letter from M. Queſnel informed her, that he was then at Tholouſe, that La Vallée was at liberty, and that he wiſhed her to ſet off for the former place, where he awaited her arrival, with all poſſible diſpatch, ſince his own affairs preſſed him to return

return to Gaſcony. Emily did not heſitate to obey him, and, having taken an affecting leave of the Count's family, in which M. Du Pont was ſtill included, and of her friends at the convent, ſhe ſet out for Thoulouſe, attended by the unhappy Annette, and guarded by a ſteady ſervant of the Count.

CHAP. X.

" Lull'd in the countleſs chambers of the brain,
Our thoughts are link'd by many a hidden chain:
Awake but one, and lo! what myriads riſe!
Each ſtamps its image as the other flies!"

PLEASURES OF MEMORY.

EMILY purſued her journey, without any accident, along the plains of Languedoc towards the north-weſt; and, on this her return to Tholouſe, which ſhe had laſt left with Madame Montoni, ſhe thought much on the melancholy fate of her aunt, who, but for her own imprudence, might now have been living in happineſs there! Montoni, too, often roſe to her fancy, ſuch as ſhe had ſeen him in his days of triumph, bold, ſpirited and commanding; ſuch alſo as ſhe had ſince beheld him in his days of vengeance; and now, only a few ſhort months had paſſed—and he had no longer the power, or the will to afflict;—he had become

become a clod of earth, and his life was vaniſhed like a ſhadow! Emily could have wept at his fate, had ſhe not remembered his crimes; for that of her unfortunate aunt ſhe did weep, and all ſenſe of her errors was overcome by the recollection of her misfortunes.

Other thoughts and other emotions ſucceeded, as Emily drew near the well-known ſcenes of her early love, and conſidered, that Valancourt was loſt to her and to himſelf, for ever. At length, ſhe came to the brow of the hill, whence, on her departure for Italy, ſhe had given a farewell look to this beloved landſcape, amongſt whoſe woods and fields ſhe had ſo often walked with Valancourt, and where he was then to inhabit, when ſhe would be far, far away! She ſaw, once more, that chain of the Pyrenées, which overlooked La Vallée, riſing, like faint clouds, on the horizon. "There, too, is Gaſcony, extended at their feet!" ſaid ſhe, "O my father,—my mother! And there too, is the Garonne!" ſhe added, drying the

the tears, that obſcured her ſight,—" and Tholouſe, and my aunt's manſion—and the groves in her garden!—O my friends! are ye all loſt to me—muſt I never, never ſee ye more!" Tears ruſhed again to her eyes, and ſhe continued to weep, till an abrupt turn in the road had nearly occaſioned the carriage to overſet, when, looking up, ſhe perceived another part of the well-known ſcene around Tholouſe, and all the reflections and anticipations, which ſhe had ſuffered, at the moment, when ſhe bade it laſt adieu, came with recollected force to her heart. She remembered how anxiouſly ſhe had looked forward to the futurity, which was to decide her happineſs concerning Valancourt, and what depreſſing fears had aſſailed her; the very words ſhe had uttered, as ſhe withdrew her laſt look from the proſpect, came to her memory. " Could I but be certain," ſhe had then ſaid, " that I ſhould ever return, and that Valancourt would ſtill live for me—I ſhould go in peace!"

Now

Now, that futurity, ſo anxiouſly anticipated, was arrived, ſhe was returned—but what a dreary blank appeared!—Valancourt no longer lived for her! She had no longer even the melancholy ſatisfaction of contemplating his image in her heart, for he was no longer the ſame Valancourt ſhe had cheriſhed there—the ſolace of many a mournful hour, the animating friend, that had enabled her to bear up againſt the oppreſſion of Montoni—the diſtant hope, that had beamed over her gloomy proſpect! On perceiving this beloved idea to be an illuſion of her own creation, Valancourt ſeemed to be annihilated, and her ſoul ſickened at the blank, that remained. His marriage with a rival, even his death, ſhe thought ſhe could have endured with more fortitude, than this diſcovery; for then, amidſt all her grief, ſhe could have looked in ſecret upon the image of goodneſs, which her fancy had drawn of him, and comfort would have mingled with her ſuffering!

Drying her tears, ſhe looked, once more, upon

upon the landſcape, which had excited them, and perceived, that ſhe was paſſing the very bank, where ſhe had taken leave of Valancourt, on the morning of her departure from Tholouſe, and ſhe now ſaw him, through her returning tears, ſuch as he had appeared, when ſhe looked from the carriage to give him a laſt adieu—ſaw him leaning mournfully againſt the high trees, and remembered the fixed look of mingled tenderneſs and anguiſh, with which he had then regarded her. This recollection was too much for her heart, and ſhe ſunk back in the carriage, nor once looked up, till it ſtopped at the gates of what was now her own manſion.

Theſe being opened, and by the ſervant, to whoſe care the chateau had been entruſted, the carriage drove into the court, where, alighting, ſhe haſtily paſſed through the great hall, now ſilent and ſolitary, to a large oak parlour, the common ſitting room of the late Madame Montoni, where, inſtead of being received by M. Queſnel, ſhe found a letter from him, informing her, that buſineſs of

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conſequence had obliged him to leave Thoulouſe two days before. Emily was, upon the whole, not ſorry to be ſpared his preſence, ſince his abrupt departure appeared to indicate the ſame indifference, with which he had formerly regarded her. This letter informed her, alſo, of the progreſs he had made in the ſettlement of her affairs, and concluded with directions, concerning the forms of ſome buſineſs, which remained for her to tranſact. But M. Queſnel's unkindneſs did not long occupy her thoughts, which returned to the remembrance of the perſons ſhe had been accuſtomed to ſee in this manſion, and chiefly of the ill-guided and unfortunate Madame Montoni. In the room, where ſhe now ſat, ſhe had breakfaſted with her on the morning of their departure for Italy; and the view of it brought moſt forcibly to her recollection all ſhe had herſelf ſuffered, at that time, and the many gay expectations, which her aunt had formed, reſpecting the journey before her. While Emily's mind was thus engaged, her eyes

wandered

wandered unconſciouſly to a large window, that looked upon the garden, and here new memorials of the paſt ſpoke to her heart, for ſhe ſaw extended before her the very avenue, in which ſhe had parted with Valancourt, on the eve of her journey; and all the anxiety, the tender intereſt he had ſhewn concerning her future happineſs, his earneſt remonſtrances againſt her committing herſelf to the power of Montoni, and the truth of his affection, came afreſh to her memory. At this moment, it appeared almoſt impoſſible, that Valancourt could have become unworthy of her regard, and ſhe doubted all that ſhe had lately heard to his diſadvantage, and even his own words, which had confirmed Count de Villefort's report of him. Overcome by the recollections, which the view of this avenue occaſioned, ſhe turned abruptly from the window, and ſunk into a chair beſide it, where ſhe ſat, given up to grief, till the entrance of Annette, with coffee, arouſed her.

"Dear madam, how melancholy this place looks

looks now," said Annette, "to what it used to do! It is dismal coming home, when there is nobody to welcome one!"

This was not the moment, in which Emily could bear the remark; her tears fell again, and, as soon as she had taken the coffee, she retired to her apartment, where she endeavoured to repose her fatigued spirits. But busy memory would still supply her with the visions of former times: she saw Valancourt interesting and benevolent, as he had been wont to appear in the days of their early love, and, amidst the scenes, where she had believed that they should sometimes pass their years together!—but, at length, sleep closed these afflicting scenes from her view.

On the following morning, serious occupation recovered her from such melancholy reflections; for, being desirous of quitting Tholouse, and of hastening on to La Vallée, she made some enquiries into the condition of the estate, and immediately dispatched a part of the necessary business concerning

concerning it, according to the directions of Monſ. Queſnel. It required a ſtrong effort to abſtract her thoughts from other intereſts ſufficiently to attend to this, but ſhe was rewarded for her exertions by again experiencing, that employment is the ſureſt antidote to ſorrow.

This day was devoted entirely to buſineſs; and, among other concerns, ſhe employed means to learn the ſituation of all her poor tenants, that ſhe might relieve their wants, or confirm their comforts.

In the evening, her ſpirits were ſo much ſtrengthened, that ſhe thought ſhe could bear to viſit the gardens, where ſhe had ſo often walked with Valancourt; and, knowing, that, if ſhe delayed to do ſo, their ſcenes would only affect her the more, whenever they ſhould be viewed, ſhe took advantage of the preſent ſtate of her mind, and entered them.

Paſſing haſtily the gate leading from the court into the gardens, ſhe hurried up the great avenue, ſcarcely permitting her memory

mory to dwell for a moment on the circumſtance of her having here parted with Valancourt, and ſoon quitted this for other walks leſs intereſting to her heart. Theſe brought her, at length, to the flight of ſteps, that led from the lower garden to the terrace, on ſeeing which, ſhe became agitated, and heſitated whether to aſcend, but, her reſolution returning, ſhe proceeded.

"Ah!" ſaid Emily, as ſhe aſcended, "theſe are the ſame high trees, that uſed to wave over the terrace, and theſe the ſame flowery thickets—the liburnum, the wild roſe, and the cerinthe—which were wont to grow beneath them! Ah! and there, too, on that bank, are the very plants, which Valancourt ſo carefully reared!—O when laſt I ſaw them!"—She checked the thought, but could not reſtrain her tears, and, after walking ſlowly on for a few moments, her agitation, upon the view of this well-known ſcene, increaſed ſo much, that ſhe was obliged to ſtop, and lean upon the wall of the terrace. It was a mild, and beautiful evening.

The

The ſun was ſetting over the extenſive landſcape, to which his beams, ſloping from beneath a dark cloud, that overhung the weſt, gave rich and partial colouring, and touched the tufted ſummits of the groves, that roſe from the garden below, with a yellow gleam. Emily and Valancourt had often admired together this ſcene, at the ſame hour; and it was exactly on this ſpot, that, on the night preceding her departure for Italy, ſhe had liſtened to his remonſtrances againſt the journey, and to the pleadings of paſſionate affection. Some obſervations, which ſhe made on the landſcape, brought this to her remembrance, and with it all the minute particulars of that converſation;—the alarming doubts he had expreſſed concerning Montoni, doubts, which had ſince been fatally confirmed; the reaſons and entreaties he had employed to prevail with her to conſent to an immediate marriage; the tenderneſs of his love, the paroxyſms of his grief, and the conviction he had repeatedly expreſſed, that they ſhould never

never meet again in happineſs! All theſe circumſtances roſe afreſh to her mind, and awakened the various emotions ſhe had then ſuffered. Her tenderneſs for Valancourt became as powerful as in the moments, when ſhe thought, that ſhe was parting with him and happineſs together, and when the ſtrength of her mind had enabled her to triumph over preſent ſuffering, rather than to deſerve the reproach of her conſcience by engaging in a clandeſtine marriage. —"Alas!" ſaid Emily, as theſe recollections came to her mind, "and what have I gained by the fortitude I then practiſed?—am I happy now?—He ſaid, we ſhould meet no more in happineſs; but, O! he little thought his own miſconduct would ſeparate us, and lead to the very evil he then dreaded!"

Her reflections increaſed her anguiſh, while ſhe was compelled to acknowledge, that the fortitude ſhe had formerly exerted, if it had not conducted her to happineſs, had ſaved her from irretrievable misfortune

—from

—from Valancourt himſelf! But in theſe moments ſhe could not congratulate herſelf on the prudence, that had ſaved her; ſhe could only lament, with bittereſt anguiſh, the circumſtances, which had conſpired to betray Valancourt into a courſe of life ſo different from that, which the virtues, the taſte, and the purſuits of his early years had promiſed; but ſhe ſtill loved him too well to believe, that his heart was even now depraved, though his conduct had been criminal. An obſervation, which had fallen from M. St. Aubert more than once, now occurred to her. "This young man," ſaid he, ſpeaking of Valancourt, "has never been at Paris;" a remark, that had ſurpriſed her at the time it was uttered, but which ſhe now underſtood, and ſhe exclaimed ſorrowfully, "O Valancourt! if ſuch a friend as my father had been with you at Paris—your noble, ingenuous nature would not have fallen!"

The ſun was now ſet, and, recalling her thoughts from their melancholy ſubject, ſhe

continued her walk; for the penſive ſhade of twilight was pleaſing to her, and the nightingales from the ſurrounding groves began to anſwer each other in the long-drawn, plaintive note, which always touched her heart; while all the fragrance of the flowery thickets, that bounded the terrace, was awakened by the cool evening air, which floated ſo lightly among their leaves, that they ſcarcely trembled as it paſſed.

Emily came, at length, to the ſteps of the pavilion, that terminated the terrace, and where her laſt interview with Valancourt, before her departure from Tholouſe, had ſo unexpectedly taken place. The door was now ſhut, and ſhe trembled, while ſhe heſitated whether to open it; but her wiſh to ſee again a place, which had been the chief ſcene of her former happineſs, at length overcoming her reluctance to encounter the painful regret it would renew, ſhe entered. The room was obſcured by a melancholy ſhade; but through the open lattices, darkened by the hanging foliage of

the vines, appeared the duſky landſcape, the Garonne reflecting the evening light, and the weſt ſtill glowing. A chair was placed near one of the balconies, as if ſome perſon had been ſitting there, but the other furniture of the pavilion remained exactly as uſual, and Emily thought it looked as if it had not once been moved ſince ſhe ſet out for Italy. The ſilent and deſerted air of the place added ſolemnity to her emotions, for ſhe heard only the low whiſper of the breeze, as it ſhook the leaves of the vines, and the very faint murmur of the Garonne.

She ſeated herſelf in a chair, near the lattice, and yielded to the ſadneſs of her heart, while ſhe recollected the circumſtances of her parting interview with Valancourt, on this ſpot. It was here, too, that ſhe had paſſed ſome of the happieſt hours of her life with him, when her aunt favoured the connection, for here ſhe had often ſat and worked, while he converſed, or read; and ſhe now well remembered with what diſ-

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criminating judgment, with what tempered energy, he uſed to repeat ſome of the ſublimeſt paſſages of their favourite authors; how often he would pauſe to admire with her their excellence, and with what tender delight he would liſten to her remarks, and correct her taſte.

"And is it poſſible," ſaid Emily, as theſe recollections returned—"is it poſſible, that a mind, ſo ſuſceptible of whatever is grand or beautiful, could ſtoop to low purſuits, and be ſubdued by frivolous temptations?"

She remembered how often ſhe had ſeen the ſudden tear ſtart in his eye, and had heard his voice tremble with emotion, while he related any great or benevolent action, or repeated a ſentiment of the ſame character. "And ſuch a mind," ſaid ſhe, "ſuch a heart, were to be ſacrificed to the habits of a great city!"

Theſe recollections becoming too painful to be endured, ſhe abruptly left the pavilion, and, anxious to eſcape from the me-

morials of her departed happineſs, returned towards the chateau. As ſhe paſſed along the terrace, ſhe perceived a perſon, walking with a ſlow ſtep, and a dejected air, under the trees, at ſome diſtance. The twilight, which was now deep, would not allow her to diſtinguiſh who it was, and ſhe imagined it to be one of the ſervants, till, the ſound of her ſteps ſeeming to reach him, he turned half round, and ſhe thought ſhe ſaw Valancourt!

Whoever it was, he inſtantly ſtruck among the thickets on the left, and diſappeared, while Emily, her eyes fixed on the place, whence he had vaniſhed, and her frame trembling ſo exceſſively, that ſhe could ſcarcely ſupport herſelf, remained, for ſome moments, unable to quit the ſpot, and ſcarcely conſcious of exiſtence. With her recollection, her ſtrength returned, and ſhe hurried towards the houſe, where ſhe did not venture to enquire who had been in the gardens, leſt ſhe ſhould betray her emotion; and ſhe ſat down alone, endeavouring

vouring to recollect the figure, air and features of the perſon ſhe had juſt ſeen. Her view of him, however, had been ſo tranſient, and the gloom had rendered it ſo imperfect, that ſhe could remember nothing with exactneſs; yet the general appearance of his figure, and his abrupt departure, made her ſtill believe, that this perſon was Valancourt. Sometimes, indeed, ſhe thought, that her fancy, which had been occupied by the idea of him, had ſuggeſted his image to her uncertain ſight: but this conjecture was fleeting. If it was himſelf, whom ſhe had ſeen, ſhe wondered much, that he ſhould be at Tholouſe, and more, how he had gained admittance into the garden; but as often as her impatience prompted her to enquire whether any ſtranger had been admitted, ſhe was reſtrained by an unwillingneſs to betray her doubts; and the evening was paſſed in anxious conjecture, and in efforts to diſmiſs the ſubject from her thoughts. But, theſe endeavours were

ineffectual, and a thouſand inconſiſtent emotions aſſailed her, whenever ſhe fancied that Valancourt might be near her; now, ſhe dreaded it to be true, and now ſhe feared it to be falſe; and, while ſhe conſtantly tried to perſuade herſelf, that ſhe wiſhed the perſon, whom ſhe had ſeen, might not be Valancourt, her heart as conſtantly contradicted her reaſon.

The following day was occupied by the viſits of ſeveral neighbouring families, formerly intimate with Madame Montoni, who came to condole with Emily on her death, to congratulate her upon the acquiſition of theſe eſtates, and to enquire about Montoni, and concerning the ſtrange reports they had heard of her own ſituation; all which was done with the utmoſt decorum, and the viſitors departed with as much compoſure as they had arrived.

Emily was wearied by theſe formalities, and diſguſted by the ſubſervient manners of many perſons, who had thought her ſcarce-

ly

ly worthy of common attention, while ſhe was believed to be a dependant on Madame Montoni.

"Surely," ſaid ſhe, "there is ſome magic in wealth, which can thus make perſons pay their court to it, when it does not even benefit themſelves. How ſtrange it is, that a fool or a knave, with riches, ſhould be treated with more reſpect by the world, than a good man, or a wiſe man in poverty!"

It was evening, before ſhe was left alone, and ſhe then wiſhed to have refreſhed her ſpirits in the free air of her garden; but ſhe feared to go thither, leſt ſhe ſhould meet again the perſon, whom ſhe had ſeen on the preceding night, and he ſhould prove to be Valancourt. The ſuſpenſe and anxiety ſhe ſuffered, on this ſubject, ſhe found all her efforts unable to controul, and her ſecret wiſh to ſee Valancourt once more, though unſeen by him, powerfully prompted her to go, but prudence and a delicate

pride reſtrained her, and ſhe determined to avoid the poſſibility of throwing herſelf in his way, by forbearing to viſit the gardens, for ſeveral days.

When, after near a week, ſhe again ventured thither, ſhe made Annette her companion, and confined her walk to the lower grounds, but often ſtarted as the leaves ruſtled in the breeze, imagining, that ſome perſon was among the thickets; and, at the turn of every alley, ſhe looked forward with apprehenſive expectation. She purſued her walk thoughtfully and ſilently, for her agitation would not ſuffer her to converſe with Annette, to whom, however, thought and ſilence were ſo intolerable, that ſhe did not ſcruple at length to talk to her miſtreſs.

"Dear madam," ſaid ſhe, "why do you ſtart ſo? one would think you knew what has happened."

"What has happened?" ſaid Emily, in a faltering voice, and trying to command her emotion.

"The

" The night before laſt, you know, madam"——

" I know nothing, Annette," replied her lady in a more hurried voice.

" The night before laſt, madam, there was a robber in the garden."

" A robber!" ſaid Emily, in an eager, yet doubting tone.

" I ſuppoſe he was a robber, madam. What elſe could he be?"

" Where did you ſee him, Annette?" rejoined Emily, looking round her, and turning back towards the chateau.

" It was not I that ſaw him, madam, it was Jean the gardener. It was twelve o'clock at night, and, as he was coming acroſs the court to go the back way into the houſe, what ſhould he ſee—but ſomebody walking in the avenue, that fronts the garden gate! So, with that, Jean gueſſed how it was, and he went into the houſe for his gun."

" His gun!" exclaimed Emily.

" Yes, madam, his gun; and then he

came out into the court to watch him. Presently, he sees him come slowly down the avenue, and lean over the garden gate, and look up at the house for a long time; and I warrant he examined it well, and settled what window he should break in at."

"But the gun," said Emily—"the gun!"

"Yes, madam, all in good time. Presently," Jean says, "the robber opened the gate, and was coming into the court, and then he thought proper to ask him his business: so he called out again, and bade him say who he was, and what he wanted. But the man would do neither; but turned upon his heel, and passed into the garden again. Jean knew then well enough how it was, and so he fired after him."

"Fired!" exclaimed Emily.

"Yes, madam, fired off his gun; but, Holy Virgin! what makes you look so pale, madam? The man was not killed,—I dare say; but if he was, his comrades carried him off: for, when Jean went in the

morning, to look for the body, it was gone, and nothing to be ſeen but a track of blood on the ground. Jean followed it, that he might find out where the man got into the garden, but it was loſt in the graſs, and——"

Annette was interrupted: for Emily's ſpirits died away, and ſhe would have fallen to the ground, if the girl had not caught her, and ſupported her to a bench, cloſe to them.

When, after a long abſence, her ſenſes returned, Emily deſired to be led to her apartment: and, though ſhe trembled with anxiety to enquire further on the ſubject of her alarm, ſhe found herſelf too ill at preſent, to dare the intelligence which it was poſſible ſhe might receive of Valancourt. Having diſmiſſed Annette, that ſhe might weep and think at liberty, ſhe endeavoured to recollect the exact air of the perſon, whom ſhe had ſeen on the terrace, and ſtill her fancy gave her the figure of Valancourt. She had, indeed, ſcarcely a,

doubt, that it was he whom she had seen, and at whom the gardener had fired: for the manner of the latter person, as described by Annette, was not that of a robber; nor did it appear probable, that a robber would have come alone, to break into a house so spacious as this.

When Emily thought herself sufficiently recovered, to listen to what Jean might have to relate, she sent for him; but he could inform her of no circumstance, that might lead to a knowledge of the person, who had been shot, or of the consequence of the wound; and, after severely reprimanding him, for having fired with bullets, and ordering diligent enquiry to be made in the neighbourhood for the discovery of the wounded person, she dismissed him, and herself remained in the same state of terrible suspense. All the tenderness she had ever felt for Valancourt, was recalled by the sense of his danger; and the more she considered the subject, the more her conviction strengthened, that it was he,

who

who had visited the gardens, for the purpose of soothing the misery of disappointed affection, amidst the scenes of his former happiness.

"Dear madam," said Annette, when she returned, "I never saw you so affected before! I dare say the man is not killed."

Emily shuddered, and lamented bitterly the rashness of the gardener, in having fired.

"I knew you would be angry enough about that, madam, or I should have told you before; and he knew so too; for, says he, 'Annette, say nothing about this to my lady. She lies on the other side of the house, so did not hear the gun, perhaps; but she would be angry with me, if she knew, seeing there is blood. But then,' says he, 'how is one to keep the garden clear, if one is afraid to fire at a robber, when one sees him?"

"No more of this," said Emily, "pray, leave me."

Annette obeyed, and Emily returned to the

the agonizing conſiderations that had aſſail-ed her before, but which ſhe, at length, en-deavoured to ſooth by a new remark. If the ſtranger was Valancourt, it was cer-tain he had come alone, and it appeared, therefore, that he had been able to quit the gardens, without aſſiſtance; a circumſtance which did not ſeem probable, had his wound been dangerous. With this conſideration, ſhe endeavoured to ſupport herſelf, during the enquiries, that were making by her ſervants in the neighbourhood; but day after day came, and ſtill cloſed in uncer-tainty, concerning this affair: and Emily, ſuffering in ſilence, at length, drooped, and ſunk under the preſſure of her anxiety. She was attacked by a ſlow fever, and when ſhe yielded to the perſuaſion of Annette to ſend for medical advice, the phyſicians pre-ſcribed little beſide air, gentle exerciſe and amuſement; but how was this laſt to be obtained? She, however, endeavoured to abſtract her thoughts from the ſubject of her anxiety, by employing them in pro-moting

moting that happineſs in others, which ſhe had loſt herſelf; and, when the evening was fine, ſhe uſually took an airing, including in her ride the cottages of ſome of her tenants, on whoſe condition ſhe made ſuch obſervations, as often enabled her, unaſked, to fulfil their wiſhes.

Her indiſpoſition, and the buſineſs ſhe engaged in, relative to this eſtate, had already protracted her ſtay at Tholouſe beyond the period ſhe had formerly fixed for her departure to La Vallée; and now ſhe was unwilling to leave the only place, where it ſeemed poſſible, that certainty could be obtained on the ſubject of her diſtreſs. But the time was come, when her preſence was neceſſary at La Vallée, a letter from the Lady Blanche now informing her, that the Count and herſelf, being then at the chateau of the Baron St. Foix, propoſed to viſit her at La Vallée, on their way home, as ſoon as they ſhould be informed of her arrival there. Blanche added, that they made this viſit, with the hope of inducing her

her to return with them to Chateau-le-Blanc.

Emily having replied to the letter of her friend, and said that she should be at La Vallée in a few days, made hasty preparations for the journey; and, in thus leaving Tholouse, endeavoured to support herself with a belief, that, if any fatal accident had happened to Valancourt, she must in this interval have heard of it.

On the evening before her departure, she went to take leave of the terrace and the pavilion. The day had been sultry, but a light shower, that fell just before sun-set, had cooled the air, and given that soft verdure to the woods and pastures, which is so refreshing to the eye; while the rain-drops, still trembling on the shrubs, glittered in the last yellow gleam, that lighted up the scene, and the air was filled with fragrance, exhaled by the late shower, from herbs and flowers, and from the earth itself. But the lovely prospect, which Emily beheld from the terrace, was no longer viewed by her

with delight; ſhe ſighed deeply, as her eye wandered over it, and her ſpirits were in a ſtate of ſuch dejection, that ſhe could not think of her approaching return to La Vallée, without tears, and ſeemed to mourn again the death of her father, as if it had been an event of yeſterday. Having reached the pavilion, ſhe ſeated herſelf at the open lattice, and, while her eyes ſettled on the diſtant mountains, that overlooked Gaſcony, ſtill gleaming on the horizon, though the ſun had now left the plains below, "Alas!" ſaid ſhe, "I return to your long-loſt ſcenes, but ſhall meet no more the parents that were wont to render them delightful!—no more ſhall ſee the ſmile of welcome, or hear the well-known voice of fondneſs:—all will now be cold and ſilent in what was once my happy home."

Tears ſtole down her cheek, as the remembrance of what that home had been returned to her; but, after indulging her ſorrow for ſome time, ſhe checked it, accuſing herſelf of ingratitude in forgetting the

the friends, that ſhe poſſeſſed, while ſhe lamented thoſe that were departed; and ſhe, at length, left the pavilion and the terrace, without having obſerved a ſhadow of Valancourt or of any other perſon.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

" Ah happy hills! ah pleaſing ſhade!
Ah fields belov'd in vain!
Where once my careleſs childhood ſtray'd,
A ſtranger yet to pain!
I feel the gales, that from ye blow,
A momentary bliſs beſtow
As waving freſh their gladſome wing,
My weary ſoul they ſeem to ſooth."

GRAY.

ON the following morning, Emily left Tholouſe at an early hour, and reached La Vallée about ſun-ſet. With the melancholy ſhe experienced on the review of a place which had been the reſidence of her parents, and the ſcene of her earlieſt delight, was mingled, after the firſt ſhock had ſubſided, a tender and undeſcribable pleaſure. For time had ſo far blunted the acuteneſs of her grief, that ſhe now courted every ſcene that awakened the memory of her friends; in every room where ſhe had been accuſ-

tomed

tomed to ſee them, they alſo ſeemed to live again; and ſhe felt that La Vallée was ſtill her happieſt home. One of the firſt apartments ſhe viſited was that which had been her father's library, and here ſhe ſeated herſelf in his arm-chair, and, while ſhe contemplated, with tempered reſignation, the picture of paſt times, which her memory gave, the tears ſhe ſhed could ſcarcely be called thoſe of grief.

Soon after her arrival, ſhe was ſurpriſed by a viſit from the venerable M. Barreaux, who came impatiently to welcome the daughter of his late reſpected neighbour to her long-deſerted home. Emily was comforted by the preſence of an old friend, and they paſſed an intereſting hour in converſing of former times, and in relating ſome of the circumſtances that had occurred to each, ſince they parted.

The evening was ſo far advanced, when M. Barreaux left Emily, that ſhe could not viſit the garden that night; but, on the following morning, ſhe traced its long-regretted

ſcenes

ſcenes with fond impatience; and, as ſhe walked beneath the groves, which her father had planted, and where ſhe had ſo often ſauntered in affectionate converſation with him, his countenance, his ſmile, even the accents of his voice, returned with exactneſs to her fancy, and her heart melted to the tender recollections.

This, too, was his favourite ſeaſon of the year, at which they had often together admired the rich and variegated tints of theſe woods, and the magical effect of autumnal lights upon the mountains; and now, the view of theſe circumſtances made memory eloquent. As ſhe wandered penſively on, ſhe fancied the following addreſs

TO AUTUMN.

Sweet Autumn! how thy melancholy grace
Steals on my heart, as through theſe ſhades I wind!
Sooth'd by thy breathing ſigh, I fondly trace
Each lonely image of the penſive mind!
Lov'd ſcenes, lov'd friends—long loſt! around me riſe,
And wake the melting thought, the tender tear!
That tear, that thought, which more than mirth I prize—
Sweet as the gradual tint, that paints thy year!

Thy

Thy farewel ſmile, with fond regret, I view,
Thy beaming lights, ſoft gliding o'er the woods;
Thy diſtant landſcape, touch'd with yellow hue
While falls the lengthen'd gleam; thy winding floods,
Now veil'd in ſhade, ſave where the ſkiff's white ſails
Swell to the breeze, and catch thy ſtreaming ray.
But now, e'en now!—the partial viſion fails,
And the wave ſmiles, as ſweeps the cloud away!
Emblem of life!—Thus checquer'd is its plan,
Thus joy ſucceeds to grief—thus ſmiles the varied man!

One of Emily's earlieſt enquiries, after her arrival at La Vallée, was concerning Thereſa, her father's old ſervant, whom it may be remembered that M. Queſnel had turned from the houſe when it was let, without any proviſion. Underſtanding that ſhe lived in a cottage at no great diſtance, Emily walked thither, and, on approaching, was pleaſed to ſee, that her habitation was pleaſantly ſituated on a green ſlope, ſheltered by a tuft of oaks, and had an appearance of comfort and extreme neatneſs. She found the old woman within, picking vine-ſtalks, who, on perceiving her young miſtreſs, was nearly overcome with joy.

"Ah!

"Ah! my dear young lady!" ſaid ſhe, "I thought I ſhould never ſee you again in this world, when I heard you was gone to that outlandiſh country. I have been hardly uſed, ſince you went; I little thought they would have turned me out of my old maſter's family in my old age!"

Emily lamented the circumſtance, and then aſſured her, that ſhe would make her latter days comfortable, and expreſſed ſatisfaction, on ſeeing her in ſo pleaſant an habitation.

Thereſa thanked her with tears, adding, "Yes, mademoiſelle, it is a very comfortable home, thanks to the kind friend, who took me out of my diſtreſs, when you was too far off to help me, and placed me here! I little thought!—but no more of that—"

"And who was this kind friend?" ſaid Emily: "whoever it was, I ſhall conſider him as mine alſo."

"Ah mademoiſelle! that friend forbad me to blazon the good deed—I muſt not ſay who it was. But how you are altered ſince I ſaw you laſt! You look ſo pale now,

and

and ſo thin, too; but then, there is my old maſter's ſmile! Yes, that will never leave you, any more than the goodneſs, that uſed to make him ſmile. Alas-a-day! the poor loſt a friend indeed, when he died!"

Emily was affected by this mention of her father, which Thereſa obſerving, changed the ſubject. "I heard, mademoiſelle," ſaid ſhe, "that Madame Cheron married a foreign gentleman, after all, and took you abroad; how does ſhe do?"

Emily now mentioned her death. "Alas!" ſaid Thereſa, "if ſhe had not been my maſter's ſiſter, I ſhould never have loved her; ſhe was always ſo croſs. But how does that dear young gentleman do, M. Valancourt? he was an handſome youth, and a good one; is he well, mademoiſelle?"

Emily was much agitated.

"A bleſſing on him!" continued Thereſa. "Ah, my dear young lady, you need not look ſo ſhy; I know all about it. Do you think I do not know, that he loves you? Why, when you was away, mademoiſelle,

ſelle, he uſed to come to the chateau, and walk about it, ſo diſconſolate! He would go into every room in the lower part of the houſe, and, ſometimes, he would ſit himſelf down in a chair, with his arms acroſs, and his eyes on the floor, and there he would ſit, and think, and think, for the hour together. He uſed to be very fond of the ſouth parlour, becauſe I told him it uſed to be yours; and there he would ſtay, looking at the pictures, which I ſaid you drew, and playing upon your lute, that hung up by the window, and reading in your books, till ſun-ſet, and then he muſt go back to his brother's chateau. And then——"

"It is enough, Thereſa," ſaid Emily.—"How long have you lived in this cottage—and how can I ſerve you? will you remain here, or return and live with me?"

"Nay, ma'amſelle!" ſaid Thereſa, "do not be ſo ſhy to your poor old ſervant. I am ſure it is no diſgrace to like ſuch a good young gentleman."

A deep ſigh eſcaped from Emily.

" Ah! how he did love to talk of you! I loved him for that. Nay, for that matter, he liked to hear me talk, for he did not ſay much himſelf. But I ſoon found out what he came to the chateau about. Then, he would go into the garden, and down to the terrace, and ſit under that great tree there, for the day together, with one of your books in his hand; but he did not read much, I fancy; for one day I happened to go that way, and I heard ſomebody talking. Who can be here? ſays I: I am ſure I let nobody into the garden, but the Chevalier! So I walked ſoftly, to ſee who it could be; and behold! it was the Chevalier himſelf, talking to himſelf about you. And he repeated your name, and ſighed ſo! and ſaid he had loſt you for ever, for that you would never return for him. I thought he was out in his reckoning there, but I ſaid nothing, and ſtole away."

" No

"No more of this trifling," ſaid Emily, awakening from her reverie: "it diſpleaſes me."

"But, when M. Queſnel let the chateau, I thought it would have broke the Chevalier's heart."

"Thereſa," ſaid Emily ſeriouſly, "you muſt name the Chevalier no more!"

"Not name him, mademoiſelle!" cried Thereſa: "what times are come up now? Why, I love the Chevalier next to my old maſter and you, mademoiſelle."

"Perhaps your love was not well beſtowed, then," replied Emily, trying to conceal her tears; "but, however that might be, we ſhall meet no more."

"Meet no more!—not well beſtowed!" exclaimed Thereſa. "What do I hear? No, mademoiſelle, my love was well beſtowed, for it was the Chevalier Valancourt, who gave me this cottage, and has ſupported me in my old age, ever ſince M. Queſnel turned me from my maſter's houſe."

"The Chevalier Valancourt!" ſaid Emily, trembling extremely.

"Yes, mademoiſelle, he himſelf, though he made me promiſe not to tell; but how could one help, when one heard him ill ſpoken of? Ah! dear young lady, you may well weep, if you have behaved unkindly to him, for a more tender heart than his never young gentleman had. He found me out in my diſtreſs, when you was too far off to help me; and M. Queſnel refuſed to do ſo, and bade me go to ſervice again—Alas! I was too old for that!—The Chevalier found me, and bought me this cottage, and gave me money to furniſh it, and bade me ſeek out another poor woman to live with me; and he ordered his brother's ſteward to pay me, every quarter, that which has ſupported me in comfort. Think then, mademoiſelle, whether I have not reaſon to ſpeak well of the Chevalier. And there are others, who could have afforded it better than he: and I am afraid he has hurt himſelf by his generoſity, for quarter day is

gone by long ſince, and no money for me! But do not weep ſo, mademoiſelle: you are not ſorry ſurely to hear of the poor Chevalier's goodneſs."

"Sorry!" ſaid Emily, and wept the more. "But how long is it ſince you have ſeen him?"

"Not this many a day, mademoiſelle."

"When did you hear of him?" enquired Emily, with increaſed emotion.

"Alas! never ſince he went away ſo ſuddenly into Languedoc; and he was but juſt come from Paris then, or I ſhould have ſeen him, I am ſure. Quarter day is gone by long ſince, and, as I ſaid, no money for me; and I begin to fear ſome harm has happened to him; and if I was not ſo far from Eſtuviere, and ſo lame, I ſhould have gone to enquire before this time; and I have nobody to ſend ſo far."

Emily's anxiety, as to the fate of Valancourt, was now ſcarcely endurable, and, ſince propriety would not ſuffer her to ſend to the chateau of his brother, ſhe

requeſted that Thereſa would immediately hire ſome perſon to go to his ſteward from herſelf, and, when he aſked for the quarterage due to her, to make enquiries concerning Valancourt. But ſhe firſt made Thereſa promiſe never to mention her name in this affair, or ever with that of the Chevalier Valancourt; and her former faithfulneſs to M. St. Aubert induced Emily to confide in her aſſurances. Thereſa now joyfully undertook to procure a perſon for this errand, and then Emily, after giving her a ſum of money to ſupply her with preſent comforts, returned, with ſpirits heavily oppreſſed, to her home, lamenting, more than ever, that an heart, poſſeſſed of ſo much benevolence as Valancourt's, ſhould have been contaminated by the vices of the world, but affected by the delicate affection, which his kindneſs to her old ſervant expreſſed for herſelf.

CHAP. XII.

. . . . . " Light thickens, and the crow
Makes wing to the rooky wood:
Good things of day begin to droop, and drowze;
While night's black agents to their preys do rouze."

MACBETH.

MEANWHILE Count de Villefort and Lady Blanche had paſſed a pleaſant fortnight at the chateau de St. Foix, with the Baron and Baroneſs, during which they made frequent excurſions among the mountains, and were delighted with the romantic wildneſs of Pyrenéan ſcenery. It was with regret, that the Count bade adieu to his old friends, although with the hope of being ſoon united with them in one family; for it was ſettled, that M. St. Foix, who now attended them into Gaſcony, ſhould receive the hand of the Lady Blanche, upon their arrival at Chateau-le-Blanc. As the road, from the Baron's reſidence to La Vallée, was

over ſome of the wildeſt tract of the Pyrenées, and where a carriage-wheel had never paſſed, the Count hired mules for himſelf and his family, as well as a couple of ſtout guides, who were well armed, informed of all the paſſes of the mountains, and who boaſted, too, that they were acquainted with every brake and dingle in the way, could tell the names of all the higheſt points of this chain of Alps, knew every foreſt, that ſpread along their narrow vallies, the ſhalloweſt part of every torrent they muſt croſs, and the exact diſtance of every goat-herd's and hunter's cabin they ſhould have occaſion to paſs,—which laſt article of learning required no very capacious memory, for even ſuch ſimple inhabitants were but thinly ſcattered over theſe wilds.

The Count left the chateau de St. Foix, early in the morning, with an intention of paſſing the night at a little inn upon the mountains, about half way to La Vallée, of which his guides had informed him; and, though this was frequented chiefly by Spaniſh

niſh muleteers, on their route into France, and, of courſe, would afford only ſorry accommodation, the Count had no alternative, for it was the only place like an inn, on the road.

After a day of admiration and fatigue, the travellers found themſelves, about ſunſet, in a woody valley, overlooked, on every ſide, by abrupt heights. They had proceeded for many leagues, without ſeeing a human habitation, and had only heard, now and then, at a diſtance, the melancholy tinkling of a ſheep-bell; but now they caught the notes of merry muſic, and preſently ſaw, within a little green receſs among the rocks, a group of mountaineers, tripping through a dance. The Count, who could not look upon the happineſs, any more than on the miſery of others, with indifference, halted to enjoy this ſcene of ſimple pleaſure. The group before him conſiſted of French and Spaniſh peaſants, the inhabitants of a neighbouring hamlet, ſome of whom were performing a ſprightly dance, the wo-

men with caſtanets in their hands, to the ſounds of a lute and a tamborine, till, from the briſk melody of France, the muſic ſoftened into a ſlow movement, to which two female peaſants danced a Spaniſh Pavan.

The Count, comparing this with the ſcenes of ſuch gaiety as he had witneſſed at Paris, where falſe taſte painted the features, and, while it vainly tried to ſupply the glow of nature, concealed the charms of animation—where affectation ſo often diſtorted the air, and vice perverted the manners—ſighed to think, that natural graces and innocent pleaſures flouriſhed in the wilds of ſolitude, while they dropped amidſt the concourſe of poliſhed ſociety. But the lengthening ſhadows reminded the travellers, that they had no time to loſe; and, leaving this joyous group, they purſued their way towards the little inn, which was to ſhelter them from the night.

The rays of the ſetting ſun now threw a yellow gleam upon the foreſts of pine and cheſnut,

cheſnut, that ſwept down the lower region of the mountains, and gave reſplendent tints to the ſnowy points above. But ſoon, even this light faded faſt, and the ſcenery aſſumed a more tremendous appearance, inveſted with the obſcurity of twilight. Where the torrent had been ſeen, it was now only heard; where the wild cliffs had diſplayed every variety of form and attitude, a dark maſs of mountains now alone appeared; and the vale, which far, far below had opened its dreadful chaſm, the eye could no longer fathom. A melancholy gleam ſtill lingered on the ſummits of the higheſt Alps, overlooking the deep repoſe of evening, and ſeeming to make the ſtillneſs of the hour more awful.

Blanche viewed the ſcene in ſilence, and liſtened with enthuſiaſm to the murmur of the pines, that extended in dark lines along the mountains, and to the faint voice of the izard among the rocks, that came at intervals on the air. But her enthuſiaſm ſunk into apprehenſion, when, as the ſhadows

deepened, ſhe looked upon the doubtful precipice, that bordered the road, as well as on the various fantaſtic forms of danger, that glimmered through the obſcurity beyond it; and ſhe aſked her father, how far they were from the inn, and whether he did not conſider the road to be dangerous at this late hour. The Count repeated the firſt queſtion to the guides, who returned a doubtful anſwer, adding, that, when it was darker, it would be ſafeſt to reſt, till the moon roſe. "It is ſcarcely ſafe to proceed now," ſaid the Count; but the guides, aſſuring him that there was no danger, went on. Blanche, revived by this aſſurance, again indulged a penſive pleaſure, as ſhe watched the progreſs of twilight gradually ſpreading its tints over the woods and mountains, and ſtealing from the eye every minuter feature of the ſcene, till the grand outlines of nature alone remained. Then fell the ſilent dews, and every wild flower, and aromatic plant, that bloomed among the cliffs, breathed forth its ſweetneſs; then, too, when the

mountain-bee had crept into its bloſſomed bed, and the hum of every little inſect, that had floated gaily in the ſun-beam, was huſhed, the ſound of many ſtreams, not heard till now, murmured at a diſtance.—The bats alone, of all the animals inhabiting this region, ſeemed awake; and, while they flitted acroſs the ſilent path, which Blanche was purſuing, ſhe remembered the following lines, which Emily had given her:

TO THE BAT.

From haunt of man, from day's obtruſive glare,
Thou ſhroud'ſt thee in the ruin's ivy'd tow'r,
Or in ſome ſhadowy glen's romantic bow'r,
Where wizard forms their myſtic charms prepare,
Where Horror lurks, and ever-boding Care!
But, at the ſweet and ſilent ev'ning hour,
When clos'd in ſleep is ev'ry languid flow'r,
Thou lov'ſt to ſport upon the twilight air,
Mocking the eye, that would thy courſe purſue,
In many a wanton-round, elaſtic, gay,
Thou flitt'ſt athwart the penſive wand'rer's way,
As his lone footſteps print the mountain-dew.
From Indian iſles thou com'ſt, with Summer's car,
Twilight thy love—thy guide her beaming ſtar!

To a warm imagination, the dubious forms, that float, half veiled in darkneſs, afford a higher delight, than the moſt diſtinct ſcenery, that the ſun can ſhew. While the fancy thus wanders over landſcapes partly of its own creation, a ſweet complacency ſteals upon the mind, and

> Refines it all to ſubtleſt feeling,
> Bids the tear of rapture roll.

The diſtant note of a torrent, the weak trembling of the breeze among the woods, or the far-off ſound of a human voice, now loſt and heard again, are circumſtances which wonderfully heighten the enthuſiaſtic tone of the mind. The young St. Foix, who ſaw the preſentations of a fervid fancy, and felt whatever enthuſiaſm could ſuggeſt, ſometimes interrupted the ſilence, which the reſt of the party ſeemed by mutual conſent to preſerve, remarking and pointing out to Blanche the moſt ſtriking effect of the hour upon the ſcenery; while Blanche, whoſe apprehenſions were beguiled

by

by the converſation of her lover, yielded to the taſte ſo congenial to his, and they converſed in a low reſtrained voice, the effect of the penſive tranquillity, which twilight and the ſcene inſpired, rather than of any fear, that they ſhould be heard. But, while the heart was thus ſoothed to tenderneſs, St. Foix gradually mingled, with his admiration of the country, a mention of his affection; and he continued to ſpeak, and Blanche to liſten, till the mountains, the woods, and the magical illuſions of twilight were remembered no more.

The ſhadows of evening ſoon ſhifted to the gloom of night, which was ſomewhat anticipated by the vapours, that, gathering faſt round the mountains, rolled in dark wreaths along their ſides; and the guides propoſed to reſt, till the moon ſhould riſe, adding, that they thought a ſtorm was coming on. As they looked round for a ſpot, that might afford ſome kind of ſhelter, an object was perceived obſcurely through the duſk, on a point of rock, a little way down

down the mountain, which they imagined to be a hunter's or a ſhepherd's cabin, and the party, with cautious ſteps, proceeded towards it. Their labour, however, was not rewarded, or their apprehenſions ſoothed; for, on reaching the object of their ſearch, they diſcovered a monumental croſs, which marked the ſpot to have been polluted by murder.

The darkneſs would not permit them to read the inſcription; but the guides knew this to be a croſs, raiſed to the memory of a Count de Beliard, who had been murdered here by a horde of banditti, that had infeſted this part of the Pyrenées, a few years before; and the uncommon ſize of the monument ſeemed to juſtify the ſuppoſition, that it was erected for a perſon of ſome diſtinction. Blanche ſhuddered, as ſhe liſtened to ſome horrid particulars of the Count's fate, which one of the guides related in a low, reſtrained tone, as if the ſound of his own voice frightened him; but, while they lingered at the croſs, attending

tending to his narrative, a flaſh of lightning glanced upon the rocks, thunder muttered at a diſtance, and the travellers, now alarmed, quitted this ſcene of ſolitary horror, in ſearch of ſhelter.

Having regained their former track, the guides, as they paſſed on, endeavoured to intereſt the Count by various ſtories of robbery, and even of murder, which had been perpetrated in the very places they muſt unavoidably paſs, with accounts of their own dauntleſs courage and wonderful eſcapes. The chief guide, or rather he, who was the moſt completely armed, drawing forth one of the four piſtols, that were tucked into his belt, ſwore, that it had ſhot three robbers within the year. He then brandiſhed a claſp-knife of enormous length, and was going to recount the wonderful execution it had done, when St. Foix, perceiving, that Blanche was terrified, interrupted him. The Count, meanwhile, ſecretly laughing at the terrible hiſtories and extravagant boaſtings of the man, reſolved

reſolved to humour him; and, telling Blanche in a whiſper, his deſign, began to recount ſome exploits of his own, which infinitely exceeded any related by the guide.

To theſe ſurpriſing circumſtances he ſo artfully gave the colouring of truth, that the courage of the guides was viſibly affected by them, who continued ſilent, long after the Count had ceaſed to ſpeak. The loquacity of the chief hero thus laid aſleep, the vigilance of his eyes and ears ſeemed more thoroughly awakened, for he liſtened, with much appearance of anxiety, to the deep thunder, which murmured at intervals, and often pauſed, as the breeze, that was now riſing, ruſhed among the pines. But, when he made a ſudden halt before a tuft of cork trees, that projected over the road, and drew forth a piſtol, before he would venture to brave the banditti which might lurk behind it, the Count could no longer refrain from laughter.

Having now, however, arrived at a level

ſpot,

ſpot, ſomewhat ſheltered from the air, by overhanging cliffs and by a wood of larch, that roſe over a precipice on the left, and the guides being yet ignorant how far they were from the inn, the travellers determined to reſt, till the moon ſhould riſe, or the ſtorm diſperſe. Blanche, recalled to a ſenſe of the preſent moment, looked on the ſurrounding gloom, with terror; but giving her hand to St. Foix, ſhe alighted, and the whole party entered a kind of cave, if ſuch it could be called, which was only a ſhallow cavity, formed by the curve of impending rocks. A light being ſtruck, a fire was kindled, whoſe blaze afforded ſome degree of cheerfulneſs and no ſmall comfort, for, though the day had been hot, the night air of this mountainous region was chilling; a fire was partly neceſſary alſo to keep off the wolves, with which thoſe wilds were infeſted.

Proviſions being ſpread upon a projection of the rock, the Count and his family partook of a ſupper, which, in a ſcene leſs

rude,

rude, would certainly have been thought leſs excellent. When the repaſt was finiſhed, St. Foix, impatient for the moon, ſauntered along the precipice, to a point, that fronted the eaſt; but all was yet wrapt in gloom, and the ſilence of night was broken only by the murmuring of woods, that waved far below, or by diſtant thunder, and, now and then, by the faint voices of the party he had quitted. He viewed, with emotions of awful ſublimity, the long volumes of ſulphureous clouds, that floated along the upper and middle regions of the air, and the lightnings that flaſhed from them, ſometimes ſilently, and, at others, followed by ſullen peals of thunder, which the mountains feebly prolonged, while the whole horizon, and the abyſs, on which he ſtood, were diſcovered in the momentary light. Upon the ſucceeding darkneſs, the fire, which had been kindled in the cave, threw a partial gleam, illumining ſome points of the oppoſite rocks, and the ſummits of pine-woods, that hung beetling

on

on the cliffs below, while their receſſes ſeemed to frown in deeper ſhade.

St. Foix ſtopped to obſerve the picture, which the party in the cave preſented, where the elegant form of Blanche was finely contraſted by the majeſtic figure of the Count, who was ſeated by her on a rude ſtone, and each was rendered more impreſſive by the groteſque habits and ſtrong features of the guides and other attendants, who were in the back ground of the piece. The effect of the light, too, was intereſting; on the ſurrounding figures it threw a ſtrong, though pale gleam, and glittered on their bright arms; while upon the foliage of a gigantic larch, that impended its ſhade over the cliff above, appeared a red, duſky tint, deepening almoſt imperceptibly into the blackneſs of night.

While St. Foix contemplated the ſcene, the moon, broad and yellow, roſe over the eaſtern ſummits, from among embattled clouds, and ſhewed dimly the grandeur of the heavens, the maſs of vapours, that roll-

ed

ed half way down the precipice beneath, and the doubtful mountains.

" What dreadful pleaſure! there to ſtand ſublime,
Like ſhipwreck'd mariner on deſert coaſt,
And view th' enormous waſte of vapour, toſt
In billows length'ning to th' horizon round * !"

From this romantic reverie he was awakened by the voices of the guides, repeating his name, which was reverbed from cliff to cliff, till an hundred tongues ſeemed to call him; when he ſoon quieted the fears of the Count and the Lady Blanche, by returning to the cave. As the ſtorm, however, ſeemed approaching, they did not quit their place of ſhelter; and the Count, ſeated between his daughter and St. Foix, endeavoured to divert the fears of the former, and converſed on ſubjects, relating to the natural hiſtory of the ſcene, among which they wandered. He ſpoke of the mineral and foſſile ſubſtances, found in the depths of theſe mountains,—the veins of marble and granite, with which they

* The Minſtrel.

abounded,

abounded, the ſtrata of ſhells, diſcovered near their ſummits, many thouſand fathom above the level of the ſea, and at a vaſt diſtance from its preſent ſhore;—of the tremendous chaſms and caverns of the rocks, the groteſque form of the mountains, and the various phænomena, that ſeem to ſtamp upon the world the hiſtory of the deluge. From the natural hiſtory he deſcended to the mention of events and circumſtances, connected with the civil ſtory of the Pyrenées; named ſome of the moſt remarkable fortreſſes, which France and Spain had erected in the paſſes of theſe mountains; and gave a brief account of ſome celebrated ſieges and encounters in early times, when Ambition firſt frightened Solitude from theſe her deep receſſes, made her mountains, which before had echoed only to the torrent's roar, tremble with the clang of arms, and, when man's firſt footſteps in her ſacred haunts had left the print of blood!

As Blanche ſat, attentive to the narrative,

tive, that rendered the ſcenes doubly intereſting, and reſigned to ſolemn emotion, while ſhe conſidered, that ſhe was on the very ground, once polluted by theſe events, her reverie was ſuddenly interrupted by a ſound, that came in the wind.—It was the diſtant bark of a watch dog. The travellers liſtened with eager hope, and, as the wind blew ſtronger, fancied, that the ſound came from no great diſtance; and, the guides having little doubt, that it proceeded from the inn they were in ſearch of, the Count determined to purſue his way. The moon now afforded a ſtronger, though ſtill an uncertain light, as ſhe moved among broken clouds; and the travellers, led by the ſound, re-commenced their journey along the brow of the precipice, preceded by a ſingle torch, that now contended with the moon-light; for the guides, believing they ſhould reach the inn ſoon after ſun-ſet, had neglected to provide more. In ſilent caution they followed the ſound, which was heard but at intervals, and which, after ſome time

entirely

entirely ceaſed. The guides endeavoured however, to point their courſe to the quarter, whence it had iſſued, but the deep roaring of a torrent ſoon ſeized their attention, and preſently they came to a tremendous chaſm of the mountain, which ſeemed to forbid all further progreſs. Blanche alighted from her mule, as did the Count and St. Foix, while the guides traverſed the edge in ſearch of a bridge, which, however rude, might convey them to the oppoſite ſide, and they, at length, confeſſed, what the Count had begun to ſuſpect, that they had been, for ſome time, doubtful of their way, and were now certain only, that they had loſt it.

At a little diſtance, was diſcovered a a rude and dangerous paſſage, formed by an enormous pine, which, thrown acroſs the chaſm, united the oppoſite precipices, and which had been felled probably by the hunter, to facilitate his chace of the izard, or the wolf. The whole party, the guides excepted, ſhuddered at the proſpect of croſſing this alpine bridge, whoſe ſides afforded no

kind of defence, and from which to fall was to die. The guides, however, prepared to lead over the mules, while Blanche ſtood trembling on the brink, and liſtening to the roar of the waters, which were ſeen deſcending from rocks above, overhung with lofty pines, and thence precipitating themſelves into the deep abyſs, where their white ſurges gleamed faintly in the moon-light. The poor animals proceeded over this perilous bridge with inſtinctive caution, neither frightened by the noiſe of the cataract, or deceived by the gloom, which the impending foliage threw athwart their way. It was now, that the ſolitary torch, which had been hitherto of little ſervice, was found to be an ineſtimable treaſure; and Blanche, terrified, ſhrinking, but endeavouring to recollect all her firmneſs and preſence of mind, preceded by her lover and ſupported by her father, followed the red gleam of the torch, in ſafety, to the oppoſite cliff.

As they went on, the heights contracted, and formed a narrow paſs, at the bottom of which,

which, the torrent they had juſt croſſed, was heard to thunder. But they were again cheered by the bark of a dog, keeping watch, perhaps, over the flocks of the mountains, to protect them from the nightly deſcent of the wolves. The ſound was much nearer than before, and, while they rejoiced in the hope of ſoon reaching a place of repoſe, a light was ſeen to glimmer at a diſtance. It appeared at a height conſiderably above the level of their path, and was loſt and ſeen again, as if the waving branches of trees ſometimes excluded and then admitted its rays. The guides hallooed with all their ſtrength, but the ſound of no human voice was heard in return, and, at length, as a more effectual means of making themſelves known, they fired a piſtol. But while they liſtened in anxious expectation, the noiſe of the exploſion was alone heard, echoing among the rocks, and it gradually ſunk into a ſilence, which no friendly hint of man diſturbed. The light, however, that had been ſeen before, now

became plainer, and, ſoon after, voices were heard indiſtinctly on the wind; but, upon the guides repeating the call, the voices ſuddenly ceaſed, and the light diſappeared.

The Lady Blanche was now almoſt ſinking beneath the preſſure of anxiety, fatigue and apprehenſion, and the united efforts of the Count and St. Foix could ſcarcely ſupport her ſpirits. As they continued to advance, an object was perceived on a point of rock above, which, the ſtrong rays of the moon then falling on it, appeared to be a watch-tower. The Count, from its ſituation and ſome other circumſtances, had little doubt, that it was ſuch, and believing, that the light had proceeded from thence, he endeavoured to re-animate his daughter's ſpirits by the near proſpect of ſhelter and repoſe, which, however rude the accommodation, a ruined watch-tower might afford.

"Numerous watch-towers have been erected among the Pyrenées," ſaid the Count, anxious only to call Blanche's attention from the ſubject of her fears; "and the

the method, by which they give intelligence of the approach of the enemy, is, you know, by fires, kindled on the ſummits of theſe edifices. Signals have thus, ſometimes, been communicated from poſt to poſt, along a frontier line of ſeveral hundred miles in length. Then, as occaſion may require, the lurking armies emerge from their fortreſſes and the foreſts, and march forth, to defend, perhaps, the entrance of ſome grand paſs, where, planting themſelves on the heights, they aſſail their aſtoniſhed enemies, who wind along the glen below, with fragments of the ſhattered cliff, and pour death and defeat upon them. The ancient forts, and watch-towers, overlooking the grand paſſes of the Pyrenées, are carefully preſerved; but ſome of thoſe in inferior ſtations have been ſuffered to fall into decay, and are now frequently converted into the more peaceful habitation of the hunter, or the ſhepherd, who, after a day of toil, retires hither, and, with his faithful dogs, forgets, near a cheerful blaze, the labour of

the chace, or the anxiety of collecting his wandering flocks, while he is ſheltered from the nightly ſtorm."

"But are they always thus peacefully inhabited?" ſaid the Lady Blanche.

"No," replied the Count, "they are ſometimes the aſylum of French and Spaniſh ſmugglers, who croſs the mountains with contraband goods from their reſpective countries, and the latter are particularly numerous, againſt whom ſtrong parties of the king's troops are ſometimes ſent. But the deſperate reſolution of theſe adventurers, who, knowing that, if they are taken, they muſt expiate the breach of the law by the moſt cruel death, travel in large parties, well armed, often daunts the courage of the ſoldiers. The ſmugglers, who ſeek only ſafety, never engage, when they can poſſibly avoid it; the military, alſo, who know, that in theſe encounters, danger is certain, and glory almoſt unattainable, are equally reluctant to fight; an engagement, therefore, very ſeldom happens,

but,

but, when it does, it never concludes till after the moſt deſperate and bloody conflict, You are inattentive, Blanche," added the Count: "I have wearied you with a dull ſubject; but ſee, yonder, in the moon-light, is the edifice we have been in ſearch of, and we are fortunate to be ſo near it, before the ſtorm burſts."

Blanche, looking up, perceived, that they were at the foot of the cliff, on whoſe ſummit the building ſtood, but no light now iſſued from it; the barking of the dog too had, for ſome time, ceaſed, and the guides began to doubt, whether this was really the object of their ſearch. From the diſtance, at which they ſurveyed it, ſhewn imperfectly by a cloudy moon, it appeared to be of more extent than a ſingle watch-tower; but the difficulty was how to aſcend the height, whoſe abrupt declivities ſeemed to afford no kind of path-way.

While the guides carried forward the torch to examine the cliff, the Count, remaining with Blanche and St. Foix at its

foot, under the ſhadow of the woods, endeavoured again to beguile the time by converſation, but again anxiety abſtracted the mind of Blanche; and he then conſulted, apart with St. Foix, whether it would be adviſable, ſhould a path be found, to venture to an edifice, which might poſſibly harbour banditti. They conſidered that their own party was not ſmall, and that ſeveral of them were well armed; and, after enumerating the dangers, to be incurred by paſſing the night in the open wild, expoſed, perhaps, to the effects of a thunder ſtorm, there remained not a doubt, that they ought to endeavour to obtain admittance to the edifice above, at any hazard reſpecting the inhabitants it might harbour; but the darkneſs and the dead ſilence, that ſurrounded it, appeared to contradict the probability of its being inhabited at all.

A ſhout from the guides aroused their attention, after which, in a few minutes, one of the Count's ſervants returned with intelligence, that a path was found, and they immediately

immediately haſtened to join the guides, when they all aſcended a little winding way cut in the rock among the thickets of dwarf wood, and, after much toil and ſome danger, reached the ſummit, where ſeveral ruined towers, ſurrounded by a maſſy wall, roſe to their view, partially illumined by the moon-light. The ſpace around the building was ſilent, and apparently forſaken, but the Count was cautious; "Step ſoftly," ſaid he, in a low voice, "while we reconnoitre the edifice."

Having proceeded ſilently along for ſome paces, they ſtopped at a gate, whoſe portals were terrible even in ruins, and, after a moment's heſitation, paſſed on to the court of entrance, but pauſed again at the head of a terrace, which, branching from it, ran along the brow of a precipice. Over this, roſe the main body of the edifice, which was now ſeen to be, not a watch-tower, but one of thoſe ancient fortreſſes, that, from age and neglect, had fallen to decay. Many parts of it, however, appeared to be ſtill

entire; it was built of gray ſtone, in the heavy Saxon-gothic ſtyle, with enormous round towers, buttreſſes of proportionable ſtrength, and the arch of the large gate, which ſeemed to open into the hall of the fabric, was round, as was that of a window above. The air of ſolemnity, which muſt ſo ſtrongly have characterized the pile even in the days of its early ſtrength, was now conſiderably heightened by its ſhattered battlements and half-demoliſhed walls, and by the huge maſſes of ruin, ſcattered in its wide area, now ſilent and graſs-grown. In this court of entrance ſtood the gigantic remains of an oak, that ſeemed to have flouriſhed and decayed with the building, which it ſtill appeared frowningly to protect by the few remaining branches, leafleſs and moſs-grown, that crowned its trunk, and whoſe wide extent told how enormous the tree had been in a former age. This fortreſs was evidently once of great ſtrength, and, from its ſituation on a point of rock, impending over a deep glen, had been of great power to annoy,

noy, as well as to reſiſt; the Count, therefore, as he ſtood ſurveying it, was ſomewhat ſurpriſed, that it had been ſuffered, ancient as it was, to ſink into ruins, and its preſent lonely and deſerted air excited in his breaſt emotions of melancholy awe. While he indulged, for a moment, theſe emotions, he thought he heard a ſound of remote voices ſteal upon the ſtillneſs, from within the building, the front of which he again ſurveyed with ſcrutinizing eyes, but yet no light was viſible. He now determined to walk round the fort, to that remote part of it, whence he thought the voices had ariſen, that he might examine whether any light could be diſcerned there, before he ventured to knock at the gate; for this purpoſe, he entered upon the terrace, where the remains of cannon were yet apparent in the thick walls, but he had not proceeded many paces, when his ſteps were ſuddenly arreſted by the loud barking of a dog within, and which he fancied to be the ſame, whoſe voice had been the means of bringing

the travellers thither. It now appeared certain, that the place was inhabited, and the Count returned to conſult again with St. Foix, whether he ſhould try to obtain admittance, for its wild aſpect had ſomewhat ſhaken his former reſolution; but, after a ſecond conſultation, he ſubmitted to the conſiderations, which before determined him, and which were ſtrengthened by the diſcovery of the dog, that guarded the fort, as well as by the ſtillneſs that pervaded it. He, therefore, ordered one of his ſervants to knock at the gate, who was advancing to obey him, when a light appeared through the loop hole of one of the towers, and the Count called loudly, but, receiving no anſwer, he went up to the gate himſelf, and ſtruck upon it with an iron-pointed pole, which had aſſiſted him to climb the ſteep. When the echoes had ceaſed, that this blow had awakened, the renewed barking,—and there were now more than one dog,—was the only ſound, that was heard. The Count ſtepped back, a few paces, to obſerve whether

whether the light was in the tower, and, perceiving, that it was gone, he returned to the portal, and had lifted the pole to ſtrike again, when again he fancied he heard the murmur of voices within, and pauſed to liſten. He was confirmed in the ſuppoſition, but they were too remote, to be heard otherwiſe than in a murmur, and the Count now let the pole fall heavily upon the gate, when almoſt immediately a profound ſilence followed. It was apparent, that the people within had heard the ſound, and their caution in admitting ſtrangers gave him a favourable opinion of them. "They are either hunters or ſhepherds," ſaid he, "who, like ourſelves, have probably ſought ſhelter from the night within theſe walls, and are fearful of admitting ſtrangers, leſt they ſhould prove robbers. I will endeavour to remove their fears." So ſaying he called aloud, "We are friends, who aſk ſhelter from the night." In a few moments, ſteps were heard within, which approached, and a voice then enquired—"Who calls?"

"Friends,"

"Friends," repeated the Count; "open the gates, and you ſhall know more."—Strong bolts were now heard to be undrawn, and a man, armed with a hunting ſpear, appeared. "What is it you want at this hour?" ſaid he. The Count beckoned his attendants, and then anſwered, that he wiſhed to enquire the way to the neareſt cabin. "Are you ſo little acquainted with theſe mountains," ſaid the man, "as not to know, that there is none, within ſeveral leagues? I cannot ſhew you the way; you muſt ſeek it—there's a moon." Saying this, he was cloſing the gate, and the Count was turning away, half diſappointed and half afraid, when another voice was heard from above, and, on looking up, he ſaw a light, and a man's face, at the grate of the portal. "Stay, friend, you have loſt your way?" ſaid the voice. "You are hunters, I ſuppoſe, like ourſelves: I will be with you preſently." The voice ceaſed, and the light diſappeared. Blanche had been alarmed by the appearance of the man, who had opened

opened the gate, and ſhe now entreated her father to quit the place; but the Count had obſerved the hunter's ſpear, which he carried; and the words from the tower encouraged him to await the event. The gate was ſoon opened, and ſeveral men in hunters' habits, who had heard above what had paſſed below, appeared, and, having liſtened ſome time to the Count, told him he was welcome to reſt there for the night. They then preſſed him, with much courteſy, to enter, and to partake of ſuch fare as they were about to ſit down to. The Count, who had obſerved them attentively while they ſpoke, was cautious, and ſomewhat ſuſpicious; but he was alſo weary, fearful of the approaching ſtorm, and of encountering alpine heights in the obſcurity of night; being likewiſe ſomewhat confident in the ſtrength and number of his attendants, he, after ſome further conſideration, determined to accept the invitation. With this reſolution he called his ſervants, who, advancing round the tower, behind which ſome of them

them had ſilently liſtened to this conference, followed their Lord, the Lady Blanche, and St. Foix into the fortreſs. The ſtrangers led them on to a large and rude hall, partially ſeen by a fire, that blazed at its extremity, round which four men, in the hunters' dreſs, were ſeated, and on the hearth were ſeveral dogs ſtretched in ſleep. In the middle of the hall ſtood a large table, and over the fire ſome part of an animal was boiling. As the Count approached, the men aroſe, and the dogs half raiſing themſelves, looked fiercely at the ſtrangers, but, on hearing their maſters' voices, kept their poſtures on the hearth.

Blanche looked round this gloomy and ſpacious hall; then at the men, and to her father, who, ſmiling cheerfully at her, addreſſed himſelf to the hunters. "This is an hoſpitable hearth," ſaid he, "the blaze of a fire is reviving after having wandered ſo long in theſe dreary wilds. Your dogs are tired; what ſucceſs have you had?" "Such as we uſually have," replied one of the men, who

had been ſeated in the hall, " we kill our game with tolerable certainty." " Theſe are fellow hunters," ſaid one of the men who had brought the Count hither, " that have loſt their way, and I have told them there is room enough in the fort for us all." " Very true, very true," replied his companion, " What luck have you had in the chace, brothers? We have killed two izards, and that, you will ſay, is pretty well." " You miſtake, friend," ſaid the Count, " we are not hunters, but travellers; but, if you will admit us to hunters' fare, we ſhall be well contented, and will repay your kindneſs." " Sit down then, brother," ſaid one of the men: " Jacques, lay more fuel on the fire, the kid will ſoon be ready; bring a ſeat for the lady too. Ma'amſelle, will you taſte our brandy? it is true Barcelona, and as bright as ever flowed from a keg." Blanche timidly ſmiled, and was going to refuſe, when her father prevented her, by taking, with a good humoured air, the glaſs offered to his daughter; and Monſ. St. Foix, who

was

was ſeated next her, preſſed her hand, and gave her an encouraging look; but her attention was engaged by a man, who ſat ſilently by the fire, obſerving St. Foix, with a ſteady and earneſt eye.

"You lead a jolly life here," ſaid the Count. "The life of a hunter is a pleaſant and a healthy one; and the repoſe is ſweet, which ſucceeds to your labour."

"Yes," replied one of his hoſts, "our life is pleaſant enough. We live here only during the ſummer, and autumnal months; in winter, the place is dreary, and the ſwoln torrents, that deſcend from the heights, put a ſtop to the chace."

"'Tis a life of liberty and enjoyment," ſaid the Count: "I ſhould like to paſs a month in your way very well."

"We find employment for our guns too," ſaid a man who ſtood behind the Count: "here are plenty of birds, of delicious flavour, that feed upon the wild thyme and herbs, that grow in the vallies. Now I think of it, there is a brace of birds hung

up

up in the ſtone gallery; go fetch them, Jacques, we will have them dreſſed."

The Count now made enquiry concerning the method of purſuing the chace among the rocks and precipices of theſe romantic regions, and was liſtening to a curious detail, when a horn was ſounded at the gate. Blanche looked timidly at her father, who continued to converſe on the ſubject of the chace, but whoſe countenance was ſomewhat expreſſive of anxiety, and who often turned his eyes towards that part of the hall neareſt the gate. The horn ſounded again, and a loud halloo ſucceeded. "Theſe are ſome of our companions, returned from their day's labour," ſaid a man, going lazily from his ſeat towards the gate; and in a few minutes, two men appeared, each with a gun over his ſhoulder, and piſtols in his belt. "What cheer, my lads? what cheer?" ſaid they, as they approached. "What luck?" returned their companions: "have you brought home your ſupper? You ſhall have none elſe."

"Hah!

"Hah! who the devil have you brought home?" ſaid they in bad Spaniſh, on perceiving the Count's party, "are they from France, or Spain?—where did you meet with them?"

"They met with us, and a merry meeting too," replied his companion aloud in good French. "This chevalier, and his party, had loſt their way, and aſked a night's lodging in the fort." The others made no reply, but threw down a kind of knapſack, and drew forth ſeveral brace of birds. The bag ſounded heavily as it fell to the ground, and the glitter of ſome bright metal within glanced on the eye of the Count, who now ſurveyed, with a more enquiring look, the man, that held the knapſack. He was a tall robuſt figure, of a hard countenance, and had ſhort black hair, curling in his neck. Inſtead of the hunters' dreſs, he wore a faded military uniform; ſandals were laced on his broad legs, and a kind of ſhort trowſers hung from his waiſt. On his head he wore a leathern cap, ſomewhat reſembling in

ſhape

ſhape an ancient Roman helmet; but the brows that ſcowled beneath it, would have characteriſed thoſe of the barbarians, who conquered Rome, rather than thoſe of a Roman ſoldier. The Count, at length, turned away his eyes, and remained ſilent and thoughtful, till, again raiſing them, he perceived a figure ſtanding in an obſcure part of the hall, fixed in attentive gaze on St. Foix, who was converſing with Blanche, and did not obſerve this; but the Count, ſoon after, ſaw the ſame man looking over the ſhoulder of the ſoldier as attentively at himſelf. He withdrew his eye, when that of the Count met it, who felt miſtruſt gathering faſt upon his mind, but feared to betray it in his countenance, and, forcing his features to aſſume a ſmile, addreſſed Blanche on ſome indifferent ſubject. When he again looked round, he perceived, that the ſoldier and his companion were gone.

The man, who was called Jacques, now returned from the ſtone-gallery. "A fire is lighted there," ſaid he, "and the birds are dreſſing;

dreſſing; the table too is ſpread there, for that place is warmer than this."

His companions approved of the removal, and invited their gueſts to follow to the gallery, of whom Blanche appeared diſtreſſed, and remained ſilent, and St. Foix looked at the Count, who ſaid, he preferred the comfortable blaze of the fire he was then near. The hunters, however, commended the warmth of the other apartment, and preſſed his removal with ſuch ſeeming courteſy; that the Count, half doubting, and half fearful of betraying his doubts, conſented to go. The long and ruinous paſſages, through which they went, ſomewhat daunted him; but the thunder, which now burſt in loud peals above, made it dangerous to quit this place of ſhelter, and he forbore to provoke his conductors by ſhewing that he diſtruſted them. The hunters led the way, with a lamp; the Count and St. Foix, who wiſhed to pleaſe their hoſts by ſome inſtances of familiarity, carried each a ſeat, and Blanche followed,

with

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"Hah! who the devil have you brought home?" ſaid they in bad Spaniſh, on perceiving the Count's party, "are they from France, or Spain?—where did you meet with them?"

"They met with us, and a merry meeting too," replied his companion aloud in good French. "This chevalier, and his party, had loſt their way, and aſked a night's lodging in the fort." The others made no reply, but threw down a kind of knapſack, and drew forth ſeveral brace of birds. The bag ſounded heavily as it fell to the ground, and the glitter of ſome bright metal within glanced on the eye of the Count, who now ſurveyed, with a more enquiring look, the man, that held the knapſack. He was a tall robuſt figure, of a hard countenance, and had ſhort black hair, curling in his neck. Inſtead of the hunters' dreſs, he wore a faded military uniform; ſandals were laced on his broad legs, and a kind of ſhort trowſers hung from his waiſt. On his head he wore a leathern cap, ſomewhat reſembling in

ſhape

ſhape an ancient Roman helmet; but the brows that ſcowled beneath it, would have characteriſed thoſe of the barbarians, who conquered Rome, rather than thoſe of a Roman ſoldier. The Count, at length, turned away his eyes, and remained ſilent and thoughtful, till, again raiſing them, he perceived a figure ſtanding in an obſcure part of the hall, fixed in attentive gaze on St. Foix, who was converſing with Blanche, and did not obſerve this; but the Count, ſoon after, ſaw the ſame man looking over the ſhoulder of the ſoldier as attentively at himſelf. He withdrew his eye, when that of the Count met it, who felt miſtruſt gathering faſt upon his mind, but feared to betray it in his countenance, and, forcing his features to aſſume a ſmile, addreſſed Blanche on ſome indifferent ſubject. When he again looked round, he perceived, that the ſoldier and his companion were gone.

The man, who was called Jacques, now returned from the ſtone-gallery. "A fire is lighted there," ſaid he, "and the birds are dreſſing;

dreſſing; the table too is ſpread there, for that place is warmer than this."

His companions approved of the removal, and invited their gueſts to follow to the gallery, of whom Blanche appeared diſtreſſed, and remained ſilent, and St. Foix looked at the Count, who ſaid, he preferred the comfortable blaze of the fire he was then near. The hunters, however, commended the warmth of the other apartment, and preſſed his removal with ſuch ſeeming courteſy; that the Count, half doubting, and half fearful of betraying his doubts, conſented to go. The long and ruinous paſſages, through which they went, ſomewhat daunted him; but the thunder, which now burſt in loud peals above, made it dangerous to quit this place of ſhelter, and he forbore to provoke his conductors by ſhewing that he diſtruſted them. The hunters led the way, with a lamp; the Count and St. Foix, who wiſhed to pleaſe their hoſts by ſome inſtances of familiarity, carried each a ſeat, and Blanche followed,

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While Blanche, trembling, and nearly fainting, was ſupplicating for releaſe, ſhe heard amid the tumult, that approached, the voice of St. Foix, and ſhe had ſcarcely renewed her ſhriek, when the door of the room was thrown open, and he appeared, much disfigured with blood, and purſued by ſeveral ruffians. Blanche neither ſaw, or heard any more; her head ſwam, her ſight failed, and ſhe became ſenſeleſs in the arms of the robber, who had detained her.

When ſhe recovered, ſhe perceived, by the gloomy light, that trembled round her, that ſhe was in the ſame chamber; but neither the Count St. Foix, or any other perſon appeared, and ſhe continued, for ſome time, entirely ſtill, and nearly in a ſtate of ſtupefaction. But the dreadful images of the paſt returning, ſhe endeavoured

voured to raiſe herſelf, that ſhe might ſeek her friends, when a ſullen groan, at a little diſtance, reminded her of St. Foix, and of the condition, in which ſhe had ſeen him enter this room; then, ſtarting from the floor, by a ſudden effort of horror, ſhe advanced to the place whence the ſound had proceeded, where a body was lying ſtretched upon the pavement, and where, by the glimmering light of a lamp, ſhe diſcovered the pale and diſfigured countenance of St. Foix. Her horrors, at that moment, may be eaſily imagined. He was ſpeechleſs; his eyes were half cloſed, and, on the hand, which ſhe graſped in the agony of deſpair, cold damps had ſettled. While ſhe vainly repeated his name, and called for aſſiſtance, ſteps approached, and a perſon entered the chamber, who, ſhe ſoon perceived, was not the Count, her father; but, what was her aſtoniſhment, when, ſupplicating him to give his aſſiſtance to St. Foix, ſhe diſcovered Ludovico! He ſcarcely pauſed to recogniſe her, but immediately bound up

the wounds of the Chevalier, and, perceiving, that he had fainted probably from loſs of blood, ran for water; but he had been abſent only a few moments, when Blanche heard other ſteps approaching, and, while ſhe was almoſt frantic with apprehenſion of the ruffians, the light of a torch flaſhed upon the walls, and then Count De Villefort appeared, with an affrighted countenance, and breathleſs with impatience, calling upon his daughter. At the ſound of his voice ſhe roſe, and ran to his arms, while he, letting fall the bloody ſword he held, preſſed her to his boſom in a tranſport of gratitude and joy, and then haſtily enquired for St. Foix, who now gave ſome ſigns of life. Ludovico ſoon after returning with water and brandy, the former was applied to his lips; and the latter to his temples and hands, and Blanche, at length, ſaw him uncloſe his eyes, and then heard him enquire for her; but the joy ſhe felt, on this occaſion, was interrupted by new alarms, when Ludovico ſaid it would be-

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neceſſary to remove Monſ. St. Foix immediately, and added, " The banditti, that are out, my Lord, were expected home an hour ago, and they will certainly find us, if we delay. That ſhrill horn, they know, is never ſounded by their comrades but on moſt deſperate occaſions, and it echoes among the mountains for many leagues round. I have known them brought home by its ſound even from the Pied de Melicant. Is any body ſtanding watch at the great gate, my Lord?"

" Nobody," replied the Count; " the reſt of my people are now ſcattered about, I ſcarcely know where. Go, Ludovico, collect them together, and look out yourſelf, and liſten if you hear the feet of mules."

Ludovico then hurried away, and the Count conſulted as to the means of removing St. Foix, who could not have borne the motion of a mule, even if his ſtrength would have ſupported him in the ſaddle.

While

While the Count was telling, that the banditti, whom they had found in the fort, were secured in the dungeon, Blanche observed that he was himself wounded, and that his left arm was entirely useless; but he smiled at her anxiety, assuring her the wound was trifling.

The Count's servants, except two who kept watch at the gate, now appeared, and, soon after, Ludovico. "I think I hear mules coming along the glen, my Lord," said he, "but the roaring of the torrent below will not let me be certain; however, I have brought what will serve the Chevalier," he added, shewing a bear's skin, fastened to a couple of long poles, which had been adapted for the purpose of bringing home such of the banditti as happened to be wounded in their encounters. Ludovico spread it on the ground, and, placing the skins of several goats upon it, made a kind of bed, into which the Chevalier, who was however now much revived, was gently lifted; and, the poles being raised upon the shoulders of the

the guides, whose footing among these steeps could best be depended upon, he was borne along with an easy motion. Some of the Count's servants were also wounded—but not materially, and, their wounds being bound up, they now followed to the great gate. As they passed along the hall, a loud tumult was heard at some distance, and Blanche was terrified. "It is only those villains in the dungeon, my lady," said Ludovico. "They seem to be bursting it open," said the Count. "No, my Lord," replied Ludovico, "it has an iron door; we have nothing to fear from them; but let me go first, and look out from the rampart."

They quickly followed him, and found their mules browsing before the gates, where the party listened anxiously, but heard no sound, except that of the torrent below and of the early breeze, sighing among the branches of the old oak, that grew in the court; and they were now glad to perceive the first tints of dawn over the mountain-

tops.

tops. When they had mounted their mules, Ludovico, undertaking to be their guide, led them by an eaſier path, than that by which they had formerly aſcended, into the glen. "We muſt avoid that valley to the eaſt, my Lord," ſaid he, "or we may meet the banditti; they went out that way in the morning."

The travellers, ſoon after, quitted this glen, and found themſelves in a narrow valley that ſtretched towards the north-weſt. The morning light upon the mountains now ſtrengthened faſt, and gradually diſcovered the green hillocks, that ſkirted the winding feet of the cliffs, tufted with cork tree, and ever-green oak. The thunder-clouds being diſperſed, had left the ſky perfectly ſerene, and Blanche was revived by the freſh breeze, and by the view of verdure, which the late rain had brightened. Soon after, the ſun aroſe, when the dripping rocks, with the ſhrubs that fringed their ſummits, and many a turfy ſlope below, ſparkled in his rays. A wreath of miſt was ſeen, floating

ing along the extremity of the valley, but the gale bore it before the travellers, and the ſun-beams gradually drew it up towards the ſummit of the mountains. They had proceeded about a league, when, St. Foix having complained of extreme faintneſs, they ſtopped to give him refreſhment, and, that the men, who bore him, might reſt. Ludovico had brought from the fort ſome flaſks of rich Spaniſh wine, which now proved a reviving cordial not only to St. Foix but to the whole party, though to him it gave only a temporary relief, for it fed the fever, that burned in his veins, and he could neither diſguiſe in his countenance the anguiſh he ſuffered, or ſuppreſs the wiſh, that he was arrived at the inn, where they had deſigned to paſs the preceding night.

While they thus repoſed themſelves under the ſhade of the dark green pines, the Count deſired Ludovico to explain ſhortly, by what means he had diſappeared from the north apartment, how he came into the hands of the banditti, and how he had contributed

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ſo eſſentially to ſerve him and his family, for to him he juſtly attributed their preſent deliverance. Ludovico was going to obey him, when ſuddenly they heard the echo of a piſtol-ſhot, from the way they had paſſed, and they roſe in alarm, haſtily to purſue their route.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

" Ah why did Fate his ſteps decoy
In ſtormy paths to roam,
Remote from all conjenial joy!"

BEATTIE.

EMILY, mean while, was ſtill ſuffering anxiety as to the fate of Valancourt; but Thereſa, having, at length, found a perſon, whom ſhe could entruſt on her errand to the ſteward, informed her, that the meſſenger would return on the following day; and Emily promiſed to be at the cottage, Thereſa being too lame to attend her.

In the evening, therefore, Emily ſet out alone for the cottage, with a melancholy foreboding, concerning Valancourt, while, perhaps, the gloom of the hour might contribute to depreſs her ſpirits. It was a gray autumnal evening towards the cloſe of the ſeaſon; heavy miſts partially obſcured the mountains, and a chiling breeze, that ſighed among

among the beech woods, ſtrewed her path with ſome of their laſt yellow leaves. Theſe, circling in the blaſt and foretelling the death of the year, gave an image of deſolation to her mind, and, in her fancy, ſeemed to announce the death of Valancourt. Of this ſhe had, indeed, more than once ſo ſtrong a preſentiment, that ſhe was on the point of returning home, feeling herſelf unequal to an encounter with the certainty ſhe anticipated, but, contending with her emotions, ſhe ſo far commanded them, as to be able to proceed.

While ſhe walked mournfully on, gazing on the long volumes of vapour, that poured upon the ſky, and watching the ſwallows, toſſed along the wind, now diſappearing among tempeſtuous clouds, and then emerging, for a moment, in circles upon the calmer air, the afflictions and viciſſitudes of her late life ſeemed pourtrayed in theſe fleeting images;—thus had ſhe been toſſed upon the ſtormy ſea of misfortune for the laſt year, with but ſhort intervals of peace,

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if peace that could be called, which was only the delay of evils. And now, when ſhe had eſcaped from ſo many dangers, was become independent of the will of thoſe, who had oppreſſed her, and found herſelf miſtreſs of a large fortune, now, when ſhe might reaſonably have expected happineſs, ſhe perceived that ſhe was as diſtant from it as ever. She would have accuſed herſelf of weakneſs and ingratitude in thus ſuffering a ſenſe of the various bleſſings ſhe poſſeſſed to be overcome by that of a ſingle misfortune, had this misfortune affected herſelf alone; but, when ſhe had wept for Valancourt even as living, tears of compaſſion had mingled with thoſe of regret, and while ſhe lamented a human being degraded to vice, and conſequently to miſery, reaſon and humanity claimed theſe tears, and fortitude had not yet taught her to ſeparate them from thoſe of love; in the preſent moments, however, it was not the certainty of his guilt, but the apprehenſion of his death (of a death alſo, to which ſhe herſelf, however

ever innocently, appeared to have been in some degree instrumental) that oppressed her. This fear increased, as the means of certainty concerning it approached; and, when she came within view of Theresa's cottage, she was so much disordered, and her resolution failed her so entirely, that, unable to proceed, she rested on a bank, beside her path; where, as she sat, the wind that groaned sullenly among the lofty branches above, seemed to her melancholy imagination to bear the sounds of distant lamentation, and, in the pauses of the gust, she still fancied she heard the feeble and far-off notes of distress. Attention convinced her, that this was no more than fancy; but the increasing gloom, which seemed the sudden close of day, soon warned her to depart, and, with faltering steps, she again moved toward the cottage. Through the casement appeared the cheerful blaze of a wood fire, and Theresa, who had observed Emily approaching, was already at the door to receive her.

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"It is a cold evening, madam," ſaid ſhe, "ſtorms are coming on, and I thought you would like a fire. Do take this chair by the hearth."

Emily, thanking her for this conſideration, ſat down, and then, looking in her face, on which the wood fire threw a gleam, ſhe was ſtruck with its expreſſion, and, unable to ſpeak, ſunk back in her chair with a countenance ſo full of woe, that Thereſa inſtantly comprehended the occaſion of it, but ſhe remained ſilent. "Ah!" ſaid Emily, at length, "it is unneceſſary for me to aſk the reſult of your enquiry—your ſilence, and that look, ſufficiently explain it;—he is dead!"

"Alas! my dear young lady," replied Thereſa, while tears filled her eyes, "this world is made up of trouble! the rich have their ſhare as well as the poor! But we muſt all endeavour to bear what Heaven pleaſes."

"He is dead then!"—interrupted Emily —"Valancourt is dead!"

"A-well-a-day! I fear he is," replied Thereſa.

"You fear!" ſaid Emily, "do you only fear?"

"Alas! yes, Madam, I fear he is! neither the ſteward, or any of the Epourville family, have heard of him ſince he left Languedoc, and the Count is in great affliction about him, for he ſays he was always punctual in writing, but that now he has not received a line from him, ſince he left Languedoc; he appointed to be at home, three weeks ago, but he has neither come, or written, and they fear ſome accident has befallen him. Alas! that ever I ſhould live to cry for his death! I am old, and might have died without being miſſed, but he——" Emily was faint, and aſked for ſome water, and Thereſa, alarmed by the voice, in which ſhe ſpoke, haſtened to her aſſiſtance, and, while ſhe held the water to Emily's lips, continued, "My dear young miſtreſs, do not take it ſo to heart; the

Chevalier, may be alive and well, for all this; let us hope the beſt!"

"O no! I cannot hope," ſaid Emily, "I am acquainted with circumſtances, that will not ſuffer me to hope. I am ſomewhat better now, and can hear what you have to ſay. Tell me, I entreat, the particulars of what you know."

"Stay till you are a little better, mademoiſelle, you look ſadly!"

"O no, Thereſa, tell me all, while I have the power to hear it," ſaid Emily, "tell me all, I conjure you!"

"Well, madam, I will then; but the ſteward did not ſay much, for Richard ſays he ſeemed ſhy of talking about Monſ. Valancourt, and what he gathered was from Gabriel, one of the ſervants, who ſaid he had heard it from my lord's gentleman."

"What did he hear?" ſaid Emily.

"Why, madam, Richard has but a bad memory, and could not remember half of it, and, if I had not aſked him a great many queſtions, I ſhould have heard little

indeed. But he ſays that Gabriel ſaid, that he and all the other ſervants were in great trouble about M. Valancourt, for that he was ſuch a kind young gentleman, they all loved him, as well as if he had been their own brother—and now, to think what was become of him! For he uſed to be ſo courteous to them all, and, if any of them had been in fault, M. Valancourt was the firſt to perſuade my lord to forgive them. And then, if any poor family was in diſtreſs, M. Valancourt was the firſt, too, to relieve them, though ſome folks, not a great way off, could have afforded that much better than he. And then, ſaid Gabriel, he was ſo gentle to every body, and, for all he had ſuch a noble look with him, he never would command, and call about him, as ſome of your quality people do, and we never minded him the leſs for that. Nay, ſays Gabriel, for that matter, we minded him the more, and would all have run to obey him at a word, ſooner than if ſome folks had told us what to do at full length;

length; aye, and were more afraid of diſpleaſing him, too, than of them, that uſed rough words to us."

Emily, who no longer conſidered it to be dangerous to liſten to praiſe, beſtowed on Valancourt, did not attempt to interrupt Thereſa, but ſat, attentive to her words, though almoſt overwhelmed with grief. "My Lord," continued Thereſa, "frets about M. Valancourt ſadly, and the more, becauſe, they ſay, he had been rather harſh againſt him lately. Gabriel ſays he had it from my Lord's valet, that M. Valancourt had *comported* himſelf wildly at Paris, and had ſpent a great deal of money, more a great deal than my Lord liked, for he loves money better than M. Valancourt, who had been led aſtray ſadly. Nay, for that matter, M. Valancourt had been put into priſon at Paris, and my Lord, ſays Gabriel, refuſed to take him out, and ſaid he deſerved to ſuffer; and, when old Gregoire, the butler, heard of this, he actually bought a walking-ſtick to take with him to Paris,

to viſit his young maſter; but the next thing we hear is, that M. Valancourt is coming home. O, it was a joyful day when he came; but he was ſadly altered, and my Lord looked very cool upon him, and he was very ſad, indeed. And, ſoon after, he went away again into Languedoc, and, ſince that time, we have never ſeen him."

Thereſa paused, and Emily, ſighing deeply, remained with her eyes fixed upon the floor, without ſpeaking. After a long pauſe, ſhe enquired what further Thereſa had heard. "Yet why ſhould I aſk?" ſhe added; "what you have already told is too much. O Valancourt! thou art gone —forever gone! and I—I have murdered thee!" Theſe words, and the countenance of deſpair which accompanied them, alarmed Thereſa, who began to fear, that the ſhock of the intelligence Emily had juſt received, had affected her ſenſes. "My dear young lady, be compoſed," ſaid ſhe, "and do not ſay ſuch frightful words. You murder M. Valancourt,

Valancourt,—dear heart!" Emily replied only by a heavy ſigh.

"Dear lady, it breaks my heart to ſee you look ſo," ſaid Thereſa, "do not ſit with your eyes upon the ground, and all ſo pale and melancholy; it frightens me to ſee you." Emily was ſtill ſilent, and did not appear to hear any thing that was ſaid to her. "Beſides, mademoiſelle," continued Thereſa, "M. Valancourt may be alive and merry yet, for what we know."

At the mention of his name, Emily raiſed her eyes, and fixed them, in a wild gaze, upon Thereſa, as if ſhe was endeavouring to underſtand what had been ſaid. "Aye, my dear lady," ſaid Thereſa, miſtaking the meaning of this conſiderate air, "M. Valancourt may be alive and merry yet."

On the repetition of theſe words, Emily comprehended their import, but, inſtead of producing the effect intended, they ſeemed only to heighten her diſtreſs. She roſe haſtily from her chair, paced the little room,

with quick ſteps, and, often ſighing deeply, claſped her hands, and ſhuddered.

Meanwhile, Thereſa, with ſimple, but honeſt affection, endeavoured to comfort her; put more wood on the fire, ſtirred it up into a brighter blaze, ſwept the hearth, ſet the chair, which Emily had left, in a warmer ſituation, and then drew forth from a cupboard a flaſk of wine. "It is a ſtormy night, madam," ſaid ſhe, "and blows cold—do come nearer the fire, and take a glaſs of this wine; it will comfort you, as it has done me, often and often—for it is not ſuch wine as one gets every day; it is rich Languedoc, and the laſt of ſix flaſks that M. Valancourt ſent me, the night before he left Gaſcony for Paris. They have ſerved me, ever ſince, as cordials, and I never drink it, but I think of him, and what kind words he ſaid to me when he gave them. Thereſa, ſays he, you are not young now, and ſhould have a glaſs of good wine, now and then. I will ſend you a few flaſks, and, when you taſte them,

you

you will ſometimes remember me your friend. Yes—thoſe were his very words—me your friend!" Emily ſtill paced the room, without ſeeming to hear what Thereſa ſaid, who continued ſpeaking. "And I have remembered him, often enough, poor young gentleman!—for he gave me this roof for a ſhelter, and that, which has ſupported me. Ah! he is in heaven, with my bleſſed maſter, if ever ſaint was!"

Thereſa's voice faltered; ſhe wept, and ſet down the flaſk, unable to pour out the wine. Her grief ſeemed to recall Emily from her own, who went towards her, but then ſtopped, and, having gazed on her, for a moment, turned ſuddenly away, as if overwhelmed by the reflection, that it was Valancourt, whom Thereſa lamented.

While ſhe yet paced the room, the ſtill, ſoft note of an oboe, or flute, was heard mingling with the blaſt, the ſweetneſs of which affected Emily's ſpirits; ſhe pauſed a moment, in attention; the tender tones, as they ſwelled along the wind, till they were

loſt again in the ruder guſt, came with a plaintiveneſs, that touched her heart, and ſhe melted into tears.

"Aye," ſaid Thereſa, drying her eyes, "there is Richard, our neighbour's ſon, playing on the oboe; it is ſad enough, to hear ſuch ſweet muſic now." Emily continued to weep, without replying. "He often plays of an evening," added Thereſa, "and, ſometimes, the young folks dance to the ſound of his oboe. But, dear young lady! do not cry ſo; and pray take a glaſs of this wine," continued ſhe, pouring ſome into a glaſs, and handing it to Emily, who reluctantly took it.

"Taſte it for M. Valancourt's ſake," ſaid Thereſa, as Emily lifted the glaſs to her lips, "for he gave it me, you know, madam." Emily's hand trembled, and ſhe ſpilt the wine as ſhe withdrew it from her lips. "For whoſe ſake!—who gave the wine?" ſaid ſhe in a faltering voice. "M. Valancourt, dear lady. I knew you would be pleaſed with it. It is the laſt flaſk I have left."

Emily

Emily ſet the wine upon the table, and burſt into tears, while Thereſa, diſappointed and alarmed, tried to comfort her; but ſhe only waved her hand, entreated ſhe might be left alone, and wept the more.

A knock at the cottage door prevented Thereſa from immediately obeying her miſtreſs, and ſhe was going to open it, when Emily, checking her, requeſted ſhe would not admit any perſon; but, afterwards, recollecting, that ſhe had ordered her ſervant to attend her home, ſhe ſaid it was only Philippe, and endeavoured to reſtrain her tears, while Thereſa opened the door.

A voice, that ſpoke without, drew Emily's attention. She liſtened, turned her eyes to the door, when a perſon now appeared, and immediately a bright gleam, that flaſhed from the fire, diſcovered—Valancourt!

Emily, on perceiving him, ſtarted from her chair, trembled, and, ſinking into it again, became inſenſible to all around her.

A ſcream from Thereſa now told, that ſhe knew Valancourt, whom her imperfect ſight,

and the duſkineſs of the place had prevented her from immediately recollecting; but his attention was immediately called from her to the perſon, whom he ſaw, falling from a chair near the fire; and, haſtening to her aſſiſtance,—he perceived, that he was ſupporting Emily! The various emotions, that ſeized him upon thus unexpectedly meeting with her, from whom he had believed he had parted for ever, and on beholding her pale and lifeleſs in his arms—may, perhaps, be imagined, though they could neither be then expreſſed, or now deſcribed, any more than Emily's ſenſations, when at length ſhe uncloſed her eyes, and, looking up, again ſaw Valancourt. The intenſe anxiety, with which he regarded her, was inſtantly changed to an expreſſion of mingled joy and tenderneſs, as his eye met hers, and he perceived, that ſhe was reviving. But he could only exclaim, "Emily!" as he ſilently watched her recovery, while ſhe averted her eye, and feebly attempted to withdraw her hand; but, in theſe the firſt

moments,

moments, which ſucceeded to the pangs his ſuppoſed death had occaſioned her, ſhe forgot every fault, which had formerly claimed indignation, and beholding Valancourt ſuch as he appeared, when he won her early affection, ſhe experienced emotions of only tenderneſs and joy. This, alas! was but the ſunſhine of a few ſhort moments; recollections roſe, like clouds, upon her mind, and, darkening the illuſive image, that poſſeſſed it, ſhe again beheld Valancourt, degraded—Valancourt unworthy of the eſteem and tenderneſs ſhe had once beſtowed upon him; her ſpirits faltered, and, withdrawing her hand, ſhe turned from him to conceal her grief, while he, yet more embarraſſed and agitated, remained ſilent.

A ſenſe of what ſhe owed to herſelf reſtrained her tears, and taught her ſoon to overcome, in ſome degree, the emotions of mingled joy and ſorrow, that contended at her heart, as ſhe roſe, and, having thanked him for the aſſiſtance he had given her, bade

Thereſa good evening. As ſhe was leaving the cottage, Valancourt, who ſeemed ſuddenly awakened as from a dream, entreated, in a voice, that pleaded powerfully for compaſſion, a few moments attention. Emily's heart, perhaps, pleaded as powerfully, but ſhe had reſolution enough to reſiſt both, together with the clamorous entreaties of Thereſa, that ſhe would not venture home alone in the dark, and had already opened the cottage door, when the pelting ſtorm compelled her to obey their requeſts.

Silent and embarraſſed, ſhe returned to the fire, while Valancourt, with increaſing agitation, paced the room, as if he wiſhed, yet feared, to ſpeak, and Thereſa expreſſed without reſtraint her joy and wonder upon ſeeing him.

"Dear heart! ſir," ſaid ſhe, "I never was ſo ſurpriſed and overjoyed in my life. We were in great tribulation before you came, for we thought you was dead, and were talking, and lamenting about you, juſt when you knocked at the door. My young

miſtreſs

miſtreſs there was crying, fit to break her heart——"

Emily looked with much diſpleaſure at Thereſa, but, before ſhe could ſpeak, Valancourt, unable to repreſs the emotion, which Thereſa's imprudent diſcovery occaſioned, exclaimed, "O my Emily! am I then ſtill dear to you! Did you, indeed, honour me with a thought—a tear? O heavens! you weep—you weep now!"

"Thereſa, ſir," ſaid Emily, with a reſerved air, and trying to conquer her tears, "has reaſon to remember you with gratitude, and ſhe was concerned, becauſe ſhe had not lately heard of you. Allow me to thank you for the kindneſs you have ſhewn her, and to ſay, that, ſince I am now upon the ſpot, ſhe muſt not be further indebted to you."

"Emily!" ſaid Valancourt, no longer maſter of his emotions, "is it thus you meet him, whom once you meant to honour with your hand—thus you meet him, who has loved you—ſuffered for you?—Yet what

do

do I ſay? Pardon me, pardon me, mademoiſelle St. Aubert, I know not what I utter. I have no longer any claim upon your remembrance—I have forfeited every pretenſion to your eſteem, your love. Yes! let me not forget, that I once poſſeſſed your affections, though to know that I have loſt them, is my ſevereſt affliction. Affliction—do I call it!—that is a term of mildneſs."

"Dear heart!" ſaid Thereſa, preventing Emily from replying, "talk of once having her affections! Why, my dear young lady loves you now, better than ſhe does any body in the whole world, though ſhe pretends to deny it."

"This is inſupportable!" ſaid Emily; "Thereſa, you know not what you ſay. Sir, if you reſpect my tranquillity, you will ſpare me from the continuance of this diſtreſs."

"I do reſpect your tranquillity too much, voluntarily to interrupt it," replied Valancourt, in whoſe boſom pride now contended with tenderneſs; "and will not be a voluntary intruder. I would have entreated a few

moments attention—yet I know not for what purpoſe. You have ceaſed to eſteem me, and to recount to you my ſufferings will degrade me more, without exciting even your pity. Yet I have been, O Emily! I am indeed very wretched!" added Valancourt, in a voice, that ſoftened from ſolemnity into grief.

"What! is my dear young maſter going out in all this rain!" ſaid Thereſa. "No, he ſhall not ſtir a ſtep. Dear! dear! to ſee how gentlefolks can afford to throw away their happineſs! Now, if you were poor people, there would be none of this. To talk of unworthineſs, and not caring about one another, when I know there are not ſuch a kind-hearted lady and gentleman in the whole province, nor any that love one another half ſo well, if the truth was ſpoken!"

Emily, in extreme vexation, now roſe from her chair, "I muſt be gone," ſaid ſhe, "the ſtorm is over."

"Stay, Emily, ſtay, mademoiſelle St. Aubert!"

bert!" ſaid Valancourt, ſummoning all his reſolution, "I will no longer diſtreſs you by my preſence. Forgive me, that I did not ſooner obey you, and, if you can, ſometimes, pity one, who, in loſing you—has loſt all hope of peace! May you be happy, Emily, however wretched I remain, happy as my fondeſt wiſh would have you!"

His voice faltered with the laſt words, and his countenance changed, while, with a look of ineffable tenderneſs and grief, he gazed upon her for an inſtant, and then quitted the cottage.

"Dear heart! dear heart!" cried Thereſa, following him to the door, "why, Monſieur Valancourt! how it rains! What a night is this to turn him out in! Why it will give him his death; and it was but now you was crying, mademoiſelle, becauſe he was dead. Well! young ladies do change their mind in a minute, as one may ſay!"

Emily made no reply, for ſhe heard not what was ſaid, while, loſt in ſorrow and thought, ſhe remained in her chair by the fire,

fire, with her eyes fixed, and the image of Valancourt ſtill before them.

" M. Valancourt is ſadly altered! madam," ſaid Thereſa; " he looks ſo thin to what he uſed to do, and ſo melancholy, and then he wears his arm in a ſling."

Emily raiſed her eyes at theſe words, for ſhe had not obſerved this laſt circumſtance, and ſhe now did not doubt, that Valancourt had received the ſhot of her gardener at Thoulouſe; with this conviction her pity for him returning, ſhe blamed herſelf for having occaſioned him to leave the cottage, during the ſtorm.

Soon after her ſervants arrived with the carriage, and Emily having cenſured Thereſa for her thoughtleſs converſation to Valancourt, and ſtrictly charging her never to repeat any hints of the ſame kind to him, withdrew to her home, thoughtful and diſconſolate.

Meanwhile, Valancourt had returned to a little inn of the village, whither he had arrived only a few moments before his viſit to Thereſa's cottage, on the way from

from Tholouſe to the chateau of the Count de Duvarney, where he had not been ſince he bade adieu to Emily at Chateau-le-Blanc, in the neighbourhood of which he had lingered for a conſiderable time, unable to ſummon reſolution enough to quit a place, that contained the object moſt dear to his heart. There were times, indeed, when grief and deſpair urged him to appear again before Emily, and, regardleſs of his ruined circumſtances, to renew his ſuit. Pride, however, and the tenderneſs of his affection, which could not long endure the thought of involving her in his misfortunes, at length, ſo far triumphed over paſſion, that he relinquiſhed this deſperate deſign, and quitted Chateau-le-Blanc. But ſtill his fancy wandered among the ſcenes, which had witneſſed his early love, and, on his way to Gaſcony, he ſtopped at Tholouſe, where he remained when Emily arrived, concealing, yet indulging his melancholy in the gardens, where he had formerly paſſed with her ſo many happy hours; often recurring,

with

with vain regret, to the evening before her departure for Italy, when ſhe had ſo unexpectedly met him on the terrace, and endeavouring to recall to his memory every word and look, which had then charmed him, the arguments he had employed to diſſuade her from the journey, and the tenderneſs of their laſt farewel. In ſuch melancholy recollections he had been indulging, when Emily unexpectedly appeared to him on this very terrace, the evening after her arrival at Tholouſe. His emotions, on thus ſeeing her, can ſcarcely be imagined; but he ſo far overcame the firſt promptings of love, that he forbore to diſcover himſelf, and abruptly quitted the gardens. Still, however, the viſion he had ſeen haunted his mind; he became more wretched than before, and the only ſolace of his ſorrow was to return in the ſilence of the night; to follow the paths which he believed her ſteps had preſſed, during the day; and, to watch round the habitation where ſhe repoſed. It was in one of theſe mournful wanderings, that

that he had received by the fire of the gardener, who miſtook him for a robber, a wound in his arm, which had detained him at Tholouſe till very lately, under the hands of a ſurgeon. There, regardleſs of himſelf and careleſs of his friends, whoſe late unkindneſs had urged him to believe, that they were indifferent as to his fate, he remained, without informing them of his ſituation; and now, being ſufficiently recovered to bear travelling, he had taken La Vallée in his way to Eſtuviere, the Count's reſidence, partly for the purpoſe of hearing of Emily, and of being again near her, and partly for that of enquiring into the ſituation of poor old Thereſa, who, he had reaſon to ſuppoſe, had been deprived of her ſtipend, ſmall as it was, and which enquiry had brought him to her cottage, when Emily happened to be there.

This unexpected interview, which had at once ſhewn him the tenderneſs of her love and the ſtrength of her reſolution, renewed all the acuteneſs of the deſpair, that had attended

tended their former ſeparation, and which no effort of reaſon could teach him, in theſe moments, to ſubdue. Her image, her look, the tones of her voice, all dwelt on his fancy, as powerfully as they had lately appeared to his ſenſes, and baniſhed from his heart every emotion, except thoſe of love and deſpair.

Before the evening concluded, he returned to Thereſa's cottage, that he might hear her talk of Emily, and be in the place, where ſhe had ſo lately been. The joy, felt and expreſſed by that faithful ſervant, was quickly changed to ſorrow, when ſhe obſerved, at one moment, his wild and phrenſied look, and, at another, the dark melancholy, that overhung him.

After he had liſtened, and for a conſiderable time, to all ſhe had to relate, concerning Emily, he gave Thereſa nearly all the money he had about him, though ſhe repeatedly refuſed it, declaring, that her miſtreſs had amply ſupplied her wants; and then, drawing a ring of value from his finger,

ger, he delivered it her with a ſolemn charge to preſent it to Emily, of whom he entreated, as a laſt favour, that ſhe would preſerve it for his ſake, and ſometimes, when ſhe looked upon it, remember the unhappy giver.

Thereſa wept as ſhe received the ring, but it was more from ſympathy, than from any preſentiment of evil; and, before ſhe could reply, Valancourt abruptly left the cottage. She followed him to the door, calling upon his name and entreating him to return; but ſhe received no anſwer, and ſaw him no more.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

"Call up him, that left half told
The ſtory of Cambuſcan bold."

MILTON.

ON the following morning, as Emily ſat in the parlour adjoining the library, reflecting on the ſcene of the preceding night, Annette ruſhed wildly into the room, and, without ſpeaking, ſunk breathleſs into a chair. It was ſome time before ſhe could anſwer the anxious enquiries of Emily, as to the occaſion of her emotion, but, at length, ſhe exclaimed, "I have ſeen his ghoſt, madam, I have ſeen his ghoſt!"

"Who do you mean?" ſaid Emily, with extreme impatience.

"It came in from the hall, madam," continued Annette, "as I was croſſing to the parlour."

"Who are you ſpeaking of?" repeated Emily, "Who came in from the hall?"

"It

" It was dreſſed juſt as I have ſeen him, often and often," added Annette. " Ah! who could have thought———"

Emily's patience was now exhauſted, and ſhe was reprimanding her for ſuch idle fancies, when a ſervant entered the room, and informed her, that a ſtranger without begged leave to ſpeak with her.

It immediately occurred to Emily, that this ſtranger was Valancourt, and ſhe told the ſervant to inform him, that ſhe was engaged, and could not ſee any perſon.

The ſervant, having delivered his meſſage, returned with one from the ſtranger, urging the firſt requeſt, and ſaying, that he had ſomething of conſequence to communicate; while Annette, who had hitherto ſat ſilent and amazed, now ſtarted up, and crying, " It is Ludovico!—it is Ludovico!" ran out of the room. Emily bade the ſervant follow her, and, if it really was Ludovico, to ſhew him into the parlour.

In a few minutes, Ludovico appeared, accompanied by Annette, who, as joy rendered her

her forgetful of all rules of decorum towards her miſtreſs, would not ſuffer any perſon to be heard, for ſome time, but herſelf. Emily expreſſed ſurpriſe and ſatisfaction, on ſeeing Ludovico in ſafety, and the firſt emotions increaſed, when he delivered letters from Count De Villefort and the Lady Blanche, informing her of their late adventure, and of their preſent ſituation at an inn among the Pyrenées, where they had been detained by the illneſs of Monſ. St. Foix, and the indiſpoſition of Blanche, who added, that the Baron St. Foix was juſt arrived to attend his ſon to his chateau, where he would remain till the perfect recovery of his wounds, and then return to Languedoc, but that her father and herſelf propoſed to be at La Vallée, on the following day. She added, that Emily's preſence would be expected at the approaching nuptials, and begged ſhe would be prepared to proceed, in a few days, to Chateau-le-Blanc. For an account of Ludovico's adventure, ſhe referred her to himſelf; and Emily, though much inter-

eſted, concerning the means, by which he had diſappeared from the north apartments, had the forbearance to ſuſpend the gratification of her curioſity, till he had taken ſome refreſhment, and had converſed with Annette, whoſe joy, on ſeeing him in ſafety, could not have been more extravagant, had he ariſen from the grave.

Meanwhile, Emily peruſed again the letters of her friends, whoſe expreſſions of eſteem and kindneſs were very neceſſary conſolations to her heart, awakened as it was by the late interview to emotions of keener ſorrow and regret.

The invitation to Chateau-le-Blanc was preſſed with ſo much kindneſs by the Count and his daughter, who ſtrengthened it by a meſſage from the Counteſs, and the occaſion of it was ſo important to her friend, that Emily could not refuſe to accept it, nor though ſhe wiſhed to remain in the quiet ſhades of her native home, could ſhe avoid perceiving the impropriety of remaining there alone, ſince Valancourt was again

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in the neighbourhood. Sometimes, too, she thought, that change of scenery and the society of her friends might contribute, more than retirement, to restore her to tranquillity.

When Ludovico again appeared, she desired him to give a detail of his adventure in the north apartments, and to tell by what means he became a companion of the banditti, with whom the Count had found him.

He immediately obeyed, while Annette, who had not yet had leisure to ask him many questions, on the subject, prepared to listen, with a countenance of extreme curiosity, venturing to remind her lady of her incredulity, concerning spirits, in the castle of Udolpho, and of her own sagacity in believing in them; while Emily, blushing at the consciousness of her late credulity, observed, that, if Ludovico's adventure could justify Annette's superstition, he had probably not been here to relate it.

Ludovico smiled at Annette, and bowed to Emily, and then began as follows:

" You may remember, madam, that, on the night, when I ſat up in the north chamber, my Lord, the Count, and Monſ. Henri accompanied me thither, and that, while they remained there, nothing happened to excite any alarm. When they were gone I made a fire in the bed-room, and, not being inclined to ſleep, I ſat down on the hearth with a book I had brought with me to divert my mind. I confeſs I did ſometimes look round the chamber, with ſomething like apprehenſion——"

" O very like it, I dare ſay," interrupted Annette, " and I dare ſay too, if the truth was known, you ſhook from head to foot." " Not quite ſo bad as that," replied Ludovico, ſmiling, " but ſeveral times, as the wind whiſtled round the caſtle, and ſhook the old caſements, I did fancy I heard odd noiſes, and, once or twice, I got up and looked about me; but nothing was to be ſeen, except the grim figures in the tapeſtry, which ſeemed to frown upon me, as I looked at them. I had ſat thus for above

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an hour," continued Ludovico, "when again I thought I heard a noiſe, and glanced my eyes round the room, to diſcover what it came from, but, not perceiving any thing, I began to read again, and, when I had finiſhed the ſtory I was upon, I felt drowſy, and dropped aſleep. But preſently I was awakened by the noiſe I had heard before, and it ſeemed to come from that part of the chamber, where the bed ſtood; and then, whether it was the ſtory I had been reading that affected my ſpirits, or the ſtrange reports, that had been ſpread of theſe apartments, I don't know, but, when I looked towards the bed again, I fancied I ſaw a man's face within the duſky curtains."

At the mention of this, Emily trembled, and looked anxiouſly, remembering the ſpectacle ſhe had herſelf witneſſed there with Dorothée.

"I confeſs, madam, my heart did fail me, at that inſtant," continued Ludovico, "but a return of the noiſe drew my atten-

tion from the bed, and I then diſtinctly heard a ſound, like that of a key, turning in a lock, but what ſurpriſed me more was, that I ſaw no door where the ſound ſeemed to come from. In the next moment, however, the arras near the bed was ſlowly lifted, and a perſon appeared behind it, entering from a ſmall door in the wall. He ſtood for a moment as if half retreating, with his head bending under the arras, which concealed the upper part of his face except his eyes ſcowling beneath the tapeſtry as he held it; and then, while he raiſed it higher, I ſaw the face of another man behind, looking over his ſhoulder. I know not how it was, but, though my ſword was upon the table before me, I had not the power juſt then to ſeize it, but ſat quite ſtill, watching them, with my eyes half ſhut as if I was aſleep. I ſuppoſe they thought me ſo, and were debating what they ſhould do, for I heard them whiſper, and they ſtood in the ſame poſture for the value of a minute, and then,

then, I thought I perceived other faces in the duſkineſs beyond the door, and heard louder whiſpers."

"This door ſurpriſes me," ſaid Emily, "becauſe I underſtood, that the Count had cauſed the arras to be lifted, and the walls examined, ſuſpecting, that they might have concealed a paſſage through which you had departed."

It does not appear ſo extraordinary to me, madam," replied Ludovico, "that this door ſhould eſcape notice, becauſe it was formed in a narrow compartment, which appeared to be part of the outward wall, and, if the Count had not paſſed over it, he might have thought it was uſeleſs to ſearch for a door where it ſeemed as if no paſſage could communicate with one; but the truth was, that the paſſage was formed within the wall itſelf.—But to return to the men, whom I ſaw obſcurely beyond the door, and who did not ſuffer me to remain long in ſuſpenſe, concerning their deſign. They all ruſhed into the room, and

ſurrounded me, though not before I had ſnatched up my ſword to defend myſelf. But what could one man do againſt four? They ſoon diſarmed me, and, having faſtened my arms, and gagged my mouth, forced me through the private door, leaving my ſword upon the table, to aſſiſt, as they ſaid, thoſe who ſhould come in the morning to look for me, in fighting againſt the ghoſts. They then led me through many narrow paſſages, cut, as I fancied, in the walls, for I had never ſeen them before, and down ſeveral flights of ſteps, till we came to the vaults underneath the caſtle; and then opening a ſtone door, which I ſhould have taken for the wall itſelf, we went through a long paſſage, and down other ſteps cut in the ſolid rock, when another door delivered us into a cave. After turning and twining about, for ſome time, we reached the mouth of it, and I found myſelf on the ſea-beach at the foot of the cliffs, with the chateau above. A boat was in waiting, into which the ruffians

fians got, forcing me along with them, and we ſoon reached a ſmall veſſel, that was at anchor, where other men appeared, when ſetting me aboard, two of the fellows who had ſeized me, followed, and the other two rowed back to the ſhore, while we ſet ſail. I ſoon found out what all this meant, and what was the buſineſs of theſe men at the chateau. We landed in Rouſillon, and, after lingering ſeveral days about the ſhore, ſome of their comrades came down from the mountains, and carried me with them to the fort, where I remained till my Lord ſo unexpectedly arrived, for they had taken good care to prevent my running away, having blindfolded me, during the journey, and, if they had not done this, I think I never could have found my road to any town, through the wild country we traverſed. After I reached the fort I was watched like a priſoner, and never ſuffered to go out, without two or three companions, and I became ſo weary of life, that I often wiſhed to get rid of it."

"Well, but they let you talk," ſaid Annette, "they did not gag you after they got you away from the chateau, ſo I don't ſee what reaſon there was to be ſo very weary of living; to ſay nothing about the chance you had of ſeeing me again."

Ludovico ſmiled, and Emily alſo, who enquired what was the motive of theſe men for carrying him off.

"I ſoon found out, madam," reſumed Ludovico, "that they were pirates, who had, during many years, ſecreted their ſpoil in the vaults of the caſtle, which, being ſo near the ſea, ſuited their purpoſe well. To prevent detection they had tried to have it believed, that the chateau was haunted, and, having diſcovered the private way to the north apartments, which had been ſhut up ever ſince the death of the lady marchioneſs, they eaſily ſucceeded. The houſekeeper and her huſband, who were the only perſons, that had inhabited the caſtle, for ſome years, were ſo terrified by the ſtrange noiſes they heard in the nights, that they would

would live there no longer; a report ſoon went abroad, that it was haunted, and the whole country believed this the more readily, I ſuppoſe, becauſe it had been ſaid, that the lady marchioneſs had died in a ſtrange way, and becauſe my lord never would return to the place afterwards."

"But why," ſaid Emily, "were not theſe pirates contented with the cave—why did they think it neceſſary to depoſit their ſpoil in the caſtle?"

"The cave, madam," replied Ludovico, "was open to any body, and their treaſures would not long have remained undiſcovered there, but in the vaults they were ſecure ſo long as the report prevailed of their being haunted. Thus then, it appears, that they brought at midnight, the ſpoil they took on the ſeas, and kept it till they had opportunities of diſpoſing of it to advantage. The pirates were connected with Spaniſh ſmugglers and banditti, who live among the wilds of the Pyrenées, and carry on various kinds of traffic, ſuch as nobody would think

of; and with this desperate horde of banditti remained, till my lord arrived. I shall never forget what I felt, when I first discovered him—I almost gave him up for lost! but I knew, that, if I shewed myself, the banditti would discover who he was, and probably murder us all, to prevent their secret in the chateau being detected. I, therefore, kept out of my lord's sight, but had a strict watch upon the ruffians, and determined, if they offered him or his family violence, to discover myself, and fight for our lives. Soon after, I overheard some of them laying a most diabolical plan for the murder and plunder of the whole party; when I contrived to speak to some of my lord's attendants, telling them what was going forward, and we consulted what was best to be done; meanwhile my lord, alarmed at the absence of the Lady Blanche, demanded her, and the ruffians having given some unsatisfactory answer, my lord and Monsr. St. Foix became furious, so then we thought it a good time to discover

the plot, and rushing into the chamber, I called out "Treachery! my lord count, defend yourself!" His lordship and the chevalier drew their swords directly, and a hard battle we had, but we conquered at last, as, madam, you are already informed of by my lord count."

"This is an extraordinary adventure," said Emily, "and much praise is due, Ludovico, to your prudence and intrepidity. There are some circumstances, however, concerning the north apartments, which still perplex me; but, perhaps, you may be able to explain them. Did you ever hear the banditti relate any thing extraordinary of these rooms?"

"No, madam," replied Ludovico, "I never heard them speak about the rooms, except to laugh at the credulity of the old housekeeper, who once was very near catching one of the pirates; it was since the Count arrived at the chateau, he said, and he laughed heartily as he related the trick he had played off."

A blush

A bluſh overſpread Emily's cheek, and ſhe impatiently deſired Ludovico to explain himſelf.

"Why, my lady," ſaid he, "as this fellow was, one night, in the bed-room, he heard ſomebody approaching through the next apartment, and not having time to lift up the arras, and unfaſten the door, he hid himſelf in the bed juſt by. There he lay for ſome time in as great a fright, I ſuppoſe——"

"As you was in," interrupted Annette, "when you ſat up ſo boldly to watch by yourſelf."

"Aye," ſaid Ludovico, "in as great a fright as he ever made any body elſe ſuffer; and preſently the houſekeeper and ſome other perſon came up to the bed, when he, thinking they were going to examine it, bethought him, that his only chance of eſcaping detection, was by terrifying them; ſo he lifted up the counterpane, but that did not do, till he raiſed his face above it, and then they both ſet off, he ſaid, as if they

they had ſeen the devil, and he got out of the rooms undiſcovered."

Emily could not forbear ſmiling at this explanation of the deception, which had given her ſo much ſuperſtitious terror, and was ſurpriſed, that ſhe could have ſuffered herſelf to be thus alarmed, till ſhe conſidered, that, when the mind has once begun to yield to the weakneſs of ſuperſtition, trifles impreſs it with the force of conviction. Still, however, ſhe remembered with awe the myſterious muſic, which had been heard, at midnight, near Chateau-le-Blanc, and ſhe aſked Ludovico if he could give any explanation of it; but he could not.

"I only know, madam," he added, "that it did not belong to the pirates, for I have heard them laugh about it, and ſay, they believed the devil was in league with them there."

"Yes, I will anſwer for it he was," ſaid Annette, her countenance brightening, "I was ſure all along, that he or his ſpirits had

had ſomething to do with the north apartments, and now you ſee, madam, I am right at laſt."

"It cannot be denied, that his ſpirits were very buſy in that part of the chateau," replied Emily, ſmiling. "But I am ſurpriſed, Ludovico, that theſe pirates ſhould perſevere in their ſchemes, after the arrival of the Count; what could they expect but certain detection?"

"I have reaſon to believe, madam," replied Ludovico, "that it was their intention to perſevere no longer than was neceſſary for the removal of the ſtores, which were depoſited in the vaults; and it appeared that they had been employed in doing ſo from within a ſhort period after the Count's arrival; but, as they had only a few hours in the night for this buſineſs, and were carrying on other ſchemes at the ſame time, the vaults were not above half emptied, when they took me away. They gloried exceedingly in this opportunity of confirming the ſuperſtitious reports, that had

been

been ſpread of the north chambers, were careful to leave every thing there as they had found it, the better to promote the deception, and frequently in their jocoſe moods, would laugh at the conſternation, which they believed the inhabitants of the caſtle had ſuffered upon my diſappearing; and it was to prevent the poſſibility of my betraying their ſecret, that they had removed me to ſuch a diſtance. From that period they conſidered the chateau as nearly their own; but I found from the diſcourſe of their comrades, that, though they were cautious, at firſt, in ſhewing their power there, they had once very nearly betrayed themſelves. Going, one night, as was their cuſtom, to the north chambers to repeat the noiſes, that had occaſioned ſuch alarm among the ſervants, they heard, as they were about to unfaſten the ſecret door, voices in the bed-room. My lord has ſince told me, that himſelf and M. Henri were then in the apartment, and they heard very extraordinary ſounds of lamentation, which it ſeems

were

were made by these fellows, with their usual design of spreading terror; and my Lord has owned, he then felt somewhat more, than surprise; but, as it was necessary to the peace of his family, that no notice should be taken, he was silent on the subject, and enjoined silence to his son."

Emily, recollecting the change, that had appeared in the spirits of the Count, after the night, when he had watched in the north room, now perceived the cause of it; and, having made some further enquiries upon this strange affair, she dismissed Ludovico, and went to give orders for the accommodation of her friends, on the following day.

In the evening, Theresa, lame as she was, came to deliver the ring, with which Valancourt had entrusted her, and, when she presented it, Emily was much affected, for she remembered to have seen him wear it often in happier days. She was, however, much displeased, that Theresa had received it, and positively refused to accept it herself,

ſelf, though to have done ſo would have afforded her a melancholy pleaſure. Thereſa entreated, expoſtulated, and then deſcribed the diſtreſs of Valancourt, when he had given the ring, and repeated the meſſage, with which he had commiſſioned her to deliver it; and Emily could not conceal the extreme ſorrow this recital occaſioned her, but wept, and remained loſt in thought.

"Alas! my dear young lady!" ſaid Thereſa, "why ſhould all this be? I have known you from your infancy, and it may well be ſuppoſed I love you, as if you was my own, and wiſh as much to ſee you happy. M. Valancourt, to be ſure, I have not known ſo long, but then I have reaſon to love him, as though he was my own ſon. I know how well you love one another, or why all this weeping and wailing?" Emily waved her hand for Thereſa to be ſilent, who, diſregarding the ſignal, continued, "And how much you are alike in your tempers and ways, and, that, if you were married,

married, you would be the happieſt couple in the whole province—then what is there to prevent your marrying? Dear dear! to ſee how ſome people fling away their happineſs, and then cry and lament about it, juſt as if it was not their own doing, and as if there was more pleaſure in wailing and weeping, than in being at peace. Learning, to be ſure, is a fine thing, but, if it teaches folks no better than that, why I had rather be without it; if it would teach them to be happier, I would ſay ſomething to it, then it would be learning and wiſdom too."

Age and long ſervices had given Thereſa a privilege to talk, but Emily now endeavoured to check her loquacity, and, though ſhe felt the juſtneſs of ſome of her remarks, did not chooſe to explain the circumſtances, that had determined her conduct towards Valancourt. She, therefore, only told Thereſa, that it would much diſpleaſe her to hear the ſubject renewed; that ſhe had reaſons

for

for her conduct, which she did not think it proper to mention, and that the ring must be returned, with an assurance, that she could not accept it with propriety; and, at the same time, she forbade Theresa to repeat any future message from Valancourt, as she valued her esteem and kindness. Theresa was afflicted, and made another attempt, though feeble, to interest her for Valancourt, but the unusual displeasure, expressed in Emily's countenance, soon obliged her to desist, and she departed in wonder and lamentation.

To relieve her mind, in some degree, from the painful recollections, that intruded upon it, Emily busied herself in preparations for the journey into Languedoc, and, while Annette, who assisted her, spoke with joy and affection of the safe return of Ludovico, she was considering how she might best promote their happiness, and determined, if it appeared, that his affection was as unchanged as that of the simple and honest Annette, to give her a marriage portion,

and

and ſettle them on ſome part of her eſtate. Theſe conſiderations led her to the remembrance of her father's paternal domain, which his affairs had formerly compelled him to diſpoſe of to M. Queſnel, and which ſhe frequently wiſhed to regain, becauſe St. Aubert had lamented, that the chief lands of his anceſtors had paſſed into another family, and becauſe they had been his birth-place and the haunt of his early years. To the eſtate at Tholouſe ſhe had no peculiar attachment, and it was her wiſh to diſpoſe of this, that ſhe might purchaſe her paternal domains, if M. Queſnel could be prevailed on to part with them, which, as he talked much of living in Italy, did not appear very improbable.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

"Sweet is the breath of vernal ſhower,
The bees' collected treaſures ſweet,
Sweet muſic's melting fall, but ſweeter yet
The ſtill, ſmall voice of gratitude."

GRAY.

ON the following day, the arrival of her friend revived the drooping Emily, and La Vallée became once more the ſcene of ſocial kindneſs and of elegant hoſpitality. Illneſs and the terror ſhe had ſuffered had ſtolen from Blanche much of her ſprightlineſs, but all her affectionate ſimplicity remained, and, though ſhe appeared leſs blooming, ſhe was not leſs engaging than before. The unfortunate adventure on the Pyrenées had made the Count very anxious to reach home, and, after little more than a week's ſtay at La Vallée, Emily prepared to ſet out with her friends for Languedoc, aſſigning the care of her houſe, during her abſence, to Thereſa.

On

On the evening, preceding her departure, this old ſervant brought again the ring of Valancourt, and, with tears, entreated her miſtreſs to receive it, for that ſhe had neither ſeen, or heard of M. Valancourt, ſince the night when he delivered it to her. As ſhe ſaid this, her countenance expreſſed more alarm, than ſhe dared to utter; but Emily, checking her own propenſity to fear, conſidered, that he had probably returned to the reſidence of his brother, and, again refuſing to accept the ring, bade Thereſa preſerve it, till ſhe ſaw him, which, with extreme reluctance, ſhe promiſed to do.

On the following day, Count De Villefort, with Emily and the Lady Blanche, left La Vallée, and on the enſuing evening arrived at the Chateau-le-Blanc, where the Counteſs, Henri, and M. Du Pont, whom Emily was ſurpriſed to find there, received them with much joy and congratulation. She was concerned to obſerve, that the Count ſtill encouraged the hopes of his friend, whoſe countenance declared, that his affec-

tion

tion had ſuffered no abatement from abſence; and was much diſtreſſed, when, on the ſecond evening after her arrival, the Count, having withdrawn her from the Lady Blanche, with whom ſhe was walking, renewed the ſubject of M. Du Pont's hopes. The mildneſs, with which ſhe liſtened to his interceſſions at firſt, deceiving him, as to her ſentiments, he began to believe, that, her affection for Valancourt being overcome, ſhe was, at length, diſpoſed to think favourably of M. Du Pont; and, when ſhe afterwards convinced him of his miſtake, he ventured, in the earneſtneſs of his wiſh to promote what he conſidered to be the happineſs of two perſons, whom he ſo much eſteemed, gently to remonſtrate with her, on thus ſuffering an ill-placed affection to poiſon the happineſs of her moſt valuable years.

Obſerving her ſilence and the deep dejection of her countenance, he concluded with ſaying, "I will not ſay more now, but I will ſtill believe, my dear Mademoiſelle St. Aubert, that you will not always reject a

perſon, ſo truly eſtimable as my friend Du Pont."

He ſpared her the pain of replying, by leaving her; and ſhe ſtrolled on, ſomewhat diſpleaſed with the Count for having perſevered to plead for a ſuit, which ſhe had repeatedly rejected, and loſt amidſt the melancholy recollections, which this topic had revived, till ſhe had inſenſibly reached the borders of the woods, that ſcreened the monaſtery of St. Clair, when, perceiving how far ſhe had wandered, ſhe determined to extend her walk a little farther, and to enquire after the abbeſs and ſome of her friends among the nuns.

Though the evening was now drawing to a cloſe, ſhe accepted the invitation of the friar, who opened the gate, and, anxious to meet ſome of her old acquaintance, proceeded towards the convent parlour. As ſhe croſſed the lawn, that ſloped from the front of the monaſtery towards the ſea, ſhe was ſtruck with the picture of repoſe, exhibited by ſome monks, ſitting in the cloiſters,

which

which extended under the brow of the woods, that crowned this eminence; where, as they meditated, at this twilight hour, holy ſubjects, they ſometimes ſuffered their attention to be relieved by the ſcene before them, nor thought it profane to look at nature, now that it had exchanged the brilliant colours of day for the ſober hue of evening. Before the cloiſters, however, ſpread an ancient cheſnut, whoſe ample branches were deſigned to ſcreen the full magnificence of a ſcene, that might tempt the wiſh to worldly pleaſures; but ſtill, beneath the dark and ſpreading foliage, gleamed a wide extent of ocean, and many a paſſing ſail; while, to the right and left, thick woods were ſeen ſtretching along the winding ſhores. So much as this had been admitted, perhaps, to give to the ſecluded votary an image of the dangers and viciſſitudes of life, and to conſole him, now that he had renounced its pleaſures, by the certainty of having eſcaped its evils. As Emily walked

 penſively

penſively along, conſidering how much ſuffering ſhe might have eſcaped, had ſhe become a votareſs of the order, and remained in this retirement from the time of her father's death, the veſper-bell ſtruck up, and the monks retired ſlowly toward the chapel, while ſhe, purſuing her way, entered the great hall, where an unuſual ſilence ſeemed to reign. The parlour too, which opened from it, ſhe found vacant, but, as the evening bell was ſounding, ſhe believed the nuns had withdrawn into the chapel, and ſat down to reſt for a moment, before ſhe returned to the chateau, where, however, the increaſing gloom made her now anxious to be.

Not many minutes had elapſed, before a nun, entering in haſte, enquired for the abbeſs, and was retiring, without recollecting Emily, when ſhe made herſelf known, and then learned, that a maſs was going to be performed for the ſoul of ſiſter Agnes, who had been declining, for ſome time, and who was now believed to be dying.

Of

Of her ſufferings the ſiſter gave a melancholy account, and of the horrors, into which ſhe had frequently ſtarted, but which had now yielded to a dejection ſo gloomy, that neither the prayers, in which ſhe was joined by the ſiſterhood, or the aſſurances of her confeſſor, had power to recall her from it, or to cheer her mind even with a momentary gleam of comfort.

To this relation Emily liſtened with extreme concern, and, recollecting the phrenſied manners and the expreſſions of horror, which ſhe had herſelf witneſſed of Agnes, together with the hiſtory, that ſiſter Frances had communicated, her compaſſion was heightened to a very painful degree. As the evening was already far advanced, Emily did not now deſire to ſee her, or to join in the maſs, and, after leaving many kind remembrances with the nun, for her old friends, ſhe quitted the monaſtery, and returned over the cliffs toward the chateau, meditating upon what ſhe had juſt heard, till at length

ſhe forced her mind upon leſs intereſting ſubjects.

The wind was high, and as ſhe drew near the chateau, ſhe often pauſed to liſten to its awful ſound, as it ſwept over the billows, that beat below, or groaned along the ſurrounding woods; and, while ſhe reſted on a cliff at a ſhort diſtance from the chateau, and looked upon the wide waters, ſeen dimly beneath the laſt ſhade of twilight, ſhe thought of the following addreſs.

TO THE WINDS.

Viewleſs, through heaven's vaſt vault your courſe ye ſteer,
Unknown from whence ye come, or whither go!
Myſterious pow'rs! I hear ye murmur low,
Till ſwells your loud guſt on my ſtartled ear,
And, awful! ſeems to ſay—ſome God is near!
I love to liſt your midnight voices float
In the dread ſtorm, that o'er the ocean rolls,
And, while their charm the angry wave controuls,
Mix with its ſullen roar, and ſink remote.
Then, riſing in the pauſe, a ſweeter note,
The dirge of ſpirits, who your deeds bewail,
A ſweeter note oft ſwells while ſleeps the gale!

But

But ſoon, ye ſightleſs pow'rs! your reſt is o'er,
Solemn and ſlow, ye riſe upon the air,
Speak in the ſhrouds, and bid the ſea-boy fear,
And the faint-warbled dirge—is heard no more!

Oh! then I deprecate your awful reign!
The loud lament yet bear not on your breath!
Bear not the craſh of bark far on the main,
Bear not the cry of men, who cry in vain,
The crew's dread chorus ſinking into death!
Oh! give not theſe, ye pow'rs! I aſk alone,
As rapt I climb theſe dark romantic ſteeps,
The elemental war, the billow's moan;
I aſk the ſtill, ſweet tear, that liſt'ning Fancy weeps!

CHAP. XVI.

. . . . . " Unnatural deeds
Do breed unnatural troubles: infected minds
To their deaf pillows will diſcharge their ſecrets.
More needs ſhe the divine, than the phyſician."

MACBETH.

ON the following evening, the view of the convent towers, riſing among the ſhadowy woods, reminded Emily of the nun, whoſe condition had ſo much affected her; and, anxious to know how ſhe was, as well as to ſee ſome of her former friends, ſhe and the Lady Blanche extended their walk to the monaſtery. At the gate ſtood a carriage, which, from the heat of the horſes, appeared to have juſt arrived; but a more than common ſtillneſs pervaded the court and the cloiſters, through which Emily and Blanche paſſed in their way to the great hall, where a nun, who was croſſing to the ſtair-caſe, replied to the enquiries of the former,

former; that ſiſter Agnes was ſtill living, and ſenſible, but that it was thought ſhe could not ſurvive the night. In the parlour, they found ſeveral of the boarders, who rejoiced to ſee Emily, and told her many little circumſtances that had happened in the convent ſince her departure, and which were intereſting to her only becauſe they related to perſons, whom ſhe had regarded with affection. While they thus converſed, the abbeſs entered the room, and expreſſed much ſatisfaction at ſeeing Emily, but her manner was unuſually ſolemn, and her countenance dejected. "Our houſe," ſaid ſhe, after the firſt ſalutations were over, "is truly a houſe of mourning—a daughter is now paying the debt of nature.—You have heard, perhaps, that our daughter Agnes is dying?"

Emily expreſſed her ſincere concern.

"Here death preſents to us a great and awful leſſon," continued the abbeſs; "let us read it, and profit by it; let it teach us to prepare ourſelves for the change, that

awaits us all! You are young, and have it yet in your power to ſecure "the peace that paſſeth all underſtanding"—the peace of conſcience. Preſerve it in your youth, that it may comfort you in age; for vain, alas! and imperfect are the good deeds of our latter years, if thoſe of our early life have been evil!"

Emily would have ſaid, that good deeds, ſhe hoped, were never vain; but ſhe conſidered that it was the abbeſs who ſpoke, and ſhe remained ſilent.

"The latter days of Agnes," reſumed the abbeſs, "have been exemplary; would they might atone for the errors of her former ones! Her ſufferings now, alas! are great; let us believe, that they will make her peace hereafter! I have left her with her confeſſor, and a gentleman, whom ſhe has long been anxious to ſee, and who is juſt arrived from Paris. They, I hope, will be able to adminiſter the repoſe, which her mind has hitherto wanted."

Emily fervently joined in the wiſh.

"During

"During her illneſs, ſhe has ſometimes named you," reſumed the abbeſs; "perhaps, it would comfort her to ſee you; when her preſent viſitors have left her, we will go to her chamber, if the ſcene will not be too melancholy for your ſpirits. But, indeed, to ſuch ſcenes, however painful, we ought to accuſtom ourſelves, for they are ſalutary to the ſoul, and prepare us for what we are ourſelves to ſuffer."

Emily became grave and thoughtful; for this converſation brought to her recollection the dying moments of her beloved father, and ſhe wiſhed once more to weep over the ſpot, where his remains were buried. During the ſilence, which followed the abbeſs's ſpeech, many minute circumſtances attending his laſt hours occurred to her—his emotion on perceiving himſelf to be in the neighbourhood of Chateau-le-Blanc—his requeſt to be interred in a particular ſpot in the church of this monaſtery—and the ſolemn charge he had delivered her to deſtroy certain papers, without examining them.—

She recollected alſo the myſterious and horrible words in thoſe manuſcripts, upon which her eye had involuntarily glanced; and, though they now, and, indeed, whenever ſhe remembered them, revived an exceſs of painful curioſity, concerning their full import, and the motives for her father's command, it was ever her chief conſolation, that ſhe had ſtrictly obeyed him in this particular.

Little more was ſaid by the abbeſs, who appeared too much affected by the ſubject ſhe had lately left, to be willing to converſe, and her companions had been for ſome time ſilent from the ſame cauſe, when this general reverie was interrupted by the entrance of a ſtranger, Monſieur Bonnac, who had juſt quitted the chamber of ſiſter Agnes. He appeared much diſturbed, but Emily fancied, that his countenance had more the expreſſion of horror, than of grief. Having drawn the abbeſs to a diſtant part of the room, he converſed with her for ſome time, during which ſhe ſeemed

to

to liſten with earneſt attention, and he to ſpeak with caution, and a more than common degree of intereſt. When he had concluded, he bowed ſilently to the reſt of the company, and quitted the room. The abbeſs, ſoon after, propoſed going to the chamber of ſiſter Agnes, to which Emily conſented, though not without ſome reluctance, and Lady Blanche remained with the boarders below.

At the door of the chamber they met the confeſſor, whom, as he lifted up his head on their approach, Emily obſerved to be the ſame that had attended her dying father; but he paſſed on, without noticing her, and they entered the apartment, where, on a mattreſs, was laid ſiſter Agnes, with one nun watching in the chair beſide her. Her countenance was ſo much changed, that Emily would ſcarcely have recollected her, had ſhe not been prepared to do ſo: it was ghaſtly, and overſpread with gloomy horror; her dim and hollow eyes were fixed on a crucifix, which ſhe held upon her boſom;

boſom; and ſhe was ſo much engaged in thought, as not to perceive the abbeſs and Emily, till they ſtood at the bed-ſide. Then, turning her heavy eyes, ſhe fixed them, in wild horror, upon Emily; and, ſcreaming, exclaimed, "Ah! that viſion comes upon me in my dying hours!"

Emily ſtarted back in terror, and looked for explanation to the abbeſs, who made her a ſignal not to be alarmed, and calmly ſaid to Agnes, "Daughter, I have brought Mademoiſelle St. Aubert to viſit you: I thought you would be glad to ſee her."

Agnes made no reply; but, ſtill gazing wildly upon Emily, exclaimed, "It is her very ſelf! Oh! there is all that faſcination in her look, which proved my deſtruction! What would you have—what is it you come to demand—Retribution?——It will ſoon be yours—it is yours already. How many years have paſſed, ſince laſt I ſaw you! My crime is but as yeſterday.—Yet I am grown old beneath it; while you are ſtill young and blooming—blooming as

when

when you forced me to commit that moſt abhorred deed! O! could I once forget it! —yet what would that avail?—the deed is done!"

Emily, extremely ſhocked, would now have left the room; but the abbeſs, taking her hand, tried to ſupport her ſpirits, and begged ſhe would ſtay a few moments, when Agnes would probably be calm, whom now ſhe tried to ſooth. But the latter ſeemed to diſregard her, while ſhe ſtill fixed her eyes on Emily, and added, "What are years of prayers and repentance? they cannot waſh out the foulneſs of murder!—Yes, murder! Where is he—where is he?—Look there—look there!—ſee where he ſtalks along the room! Why do you come to torment me now?" continued Agnes, while her ſtraining eyes were bent on air, "why was not I puniſhed before?—O! do not frown ſo ſternly! Hah! there again! 'tis ſhe herſelf! Why do you look ſo piteouſly upon me—and ſmile, too? ſmile on me! What groan was that?"

Agnes

Agnes ſunk down, apparently lifeleſs, and Emily, unable to ſupport herſelf, leaned againſt the bed, while the abbeſs and the attendant nun were applying the uſual remedies to Agnes. "Peace," ſaid the abbeſs, when Emily was going to ſpeak, "the delirium is going off, ſhe will ſoon revive. When was ſhe thus before, daughter?"

"Not of many weeks, madam," replied the nun, "but her ſpirits have been much agitated by the arrival of the gentleman ſhe wiſhed ſo much to ſee."

"Yes," obſerved the abbeſs, "that has undoubtedly occaſioned this paroxyſm of phrenſy. When ſhe is better, we will leave her to repoſe."

Emily very readily conſented, but, though ſhe could now give little aſſiſtance, ſhe was unwilling to quit the chamber, while any might be neceſſary.

When Agnes recovered her ſenſes, ſhe again fixed her eyes on Emily, but their wild expreſſion was gone, and a gloomy melancholy

lancholy had ſucceeded. It was ſome moments before ſhe recovered ſufficient ſpirits to ſpeak; ſhe then ſaid feebly—"The likeneſs is wonderful!—ſurely it muſt be ſomething more than fancy. Tell me, I conjure you," ſhe added, addreſſing Emily, "though your name is St. Aubert, are you not the daughter of the Marchioneſs?" "What Marchioneſs?" ſaid Emily, in extreme ſurpriſe; for ſhe had imagined, from the calmneſs of Agnes's manner, that her intellects were reſtored. The abbeſs gave her a ſignificant glance, but ſhe repeated the queſtion.

"What Marchioneſs?" exclaimed Agnes, "I know but of one—the Marchioneſs de Villeroi."

Emily, remembering the emotion of her late father, upon the unexpected mention of this lady, and his requeſt to be laid near the tomb of the Villerois, now felt greatly intereſted, and ſhe entreated Agnes to explain the reaſon of her queſtion. The abbeſs would now have withdrawn Emily from

from the room, who being, however, detained by a ſtrong intereſt, repeated her entreaties.

"Bring me that caſket, ſiſter," ſaid Agnes; "I will ſhew her to you; yet you need only look at that mirror, and you will behold her; you ſurely are her daughter: ſuch ſtriking reſemblance is never found but among near relations."

The nun brought the caſket, and Agnes, having directed her how to unlock it, ſhe took thence a miniature, in which Emily perceived the exact reſemblance of the picture, which ſhe had found among her late father's papers. Agnes held out her hand to receive it; gazed upon it earneſtly for ſome moments in ſilence; and then, with a countenance of deep deſpair, threw up her eyes to Heaven, and prayed inwardly. When ſhe had finiſhed, ſhe returned the miniature to Emily. "Keep it," ſaid ſhe, I bequeath it to you, for I muſt believe it is your right. I have frequently obſerved the reſemblance between you; but never, till this day,

day, did it ſtrike upon my conſcience ſo powerfully! Stay, ſiſter, do not remove the caſket—there is another picture I would ſhew."

Emily trembled with expectation, and the abbeſs again would have withdrawn her. "Agnes is ſtill diſordered," ſaid ſhe, "you obſerve how ſhe wanders. In theſe moods ſhe ſays any thing, and does not ſcruple, as you have witneſſed, to accuſe herſelf of the moſt horrible crimes."

Emily, however, thought ſhe perceived ſomething more than madneſs in the inconſiſtencies of Agnes, whoſe mention of the Marchioneſs, and production of her picture, had intereſted her ſo much, that ſhe determined to obtain further information, if poſſible, reſpecting the ſubject of it.

The nun returned with the caſket, and, Agnes pointing out to her a ſecret drawer, ſhe took from it another miniature. "Here," ſaid Agnes, as ſhe offered it to Emily, "learn a leſſon for your vanity, at leaſt; look well at this picture, and ſee if you can diſcover

diſcover any reſemblance between what I was, and what I am."

Emily impatiently received the miniature, which her eyes had ſcarcely glanced upon, before her trembling hands had nearly ſuffered it to fall—it was the reſemblance of the portrait of Signora Laurentini, which ſhe had formerly ſeen in the caſtle of Udolpho—the lady, who had diſappeared in ſo myſterious a manner, and whom Montoni had been ſuſpected of having cauſed to be murdered.

In ſilent aſtoniſhment, Emily continued to gaze alternately upon the picture and the dying nun, endeavouring to trace a reſemblance between them, which no longer exiſted.

"Why do you look ſo ſternly on me?" ſaid Agnes, miſtaking the nature of Emily's emotion.

"I have ſeen this face before," ſaid Emily, at length; "was it really your reſemblance?"

"You may well aſk that queſtion," replied

plied the nun,—" but it was once eſteemed a ſtriking likeneſs of me. Look at me well, and ſee what guilt has made me. I then was innocent; the evil paſſions of my nature ſlept. Siſter!" added ſhe ſolemnly, and ſtretching forth her cold, damp hand to Emily, who ſhuddered at its touch—" Siſter! beware of the firſt indulgence of the paſſions; beware of the firſt! Their courſe, if not checked then, is rapid—their force is uncontroulable—they lead us we know not whither—they lead us perhaps to the commiſſion of crimes, for which whole years of prayer and penitence cannot atone!—Such may be the force of even a ſingle paſſion, that it overcomes every other, and ſears up every other approach to the heart. Poſſeſſing us like a fiend, it leads us on to the acts of a fiend, making us inſenſible to pity and to conſcience. And, when its purpoſe is accompliſhed, like a fiend, it leaves us to the torture of thoſe feelings, which its power had ſuſpended—not annihilated,—to

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the tortures of compaſſion, remorſe, and conſcience. Then, we awaken as from a dream, and perceive a new world around us —we gaze in aſtoniſhment, and horror—but the deed is committed; not all the powers of heaven and earth united can undo it—and the ſpectres of conſcience will not fly! What are riches—grandeur—health itſelf, to the luxury of a pure conſcience, the health of the ſoul;—and what the ſufferings of poverty, diſappointment, deſpair—to the anguiſh of an afflicted one! O! how long is it ſince I knew that luxury! I believed, that I had ſuffered the moſt agonizing pangs of human nature, in love, jealouſy and deſpair—but theſe pangs were eaſe, compared with the ſtings of conſcience, which I have ſince endured. I taſted too what was called the ſweet of revenge—but it was tranſient, it expired even with the object, that provoked it. Remember, ſiſter, that the paſſions are the ſeeds of vices as well as of virtues, from which either may ſpring, accordingly

cordingly as they are nurtured. Unhappy they who have never been taught the art to govern them!"

"Alas! unhappy!" ſaid the abbeſs, "and ill-informed of our holy religion!" Emily liſtened to Agnes, in ſilent awe, while ſhe ſtill examined the miniature, and became confirmed in her opinion of its ſtrong reſemblance to the portrait at Udolpho. "This face is familiar to me," ſaid ſhe, wiſhing to lead the nun to an explanation, yet fearing to diſcover too abruptly her knowledge of Udolpho.

"You are miſtaken," replied Agnes, "you certainly never ſaw that picture before."

"No," replied Emily, "but I have ſeen one extremely like it." "Impoſſible," ſaid Agnes, who may now be called the Lady Laurentini.

"It was in the caſtle of Udolpho," continued Emily, looking ſtedfaſtly at her.

"Of Udolpho!" exclaimed Laurentini,

"of

"of Udolpho in Italy!" "The ſame," replied Emily.

"You know me then," ſaid Laurentini, "and you are the daughter of the Marchioneſs." Emily was ſomewhat ſurpriſed at this abrupt aſſertion. "I am the daughter of the late Monſ. St. Aubert," ſaid ſhe; "and the lady you name is an utter ſtranger to me."

"At leaſt you believe ſo," rejoined Laurentini.

Emily aſked what reaſons there could be to believe otherwiſe.

"The family likeneſs, that you bear her," ſaid the nun. "The Marchioneſs, it is known, was attached to a gentleman of Gaſcony, at the time when ſhe accepted the hand of the Marquis, by the command of her father. Ill-fated, unhappy woman!"

Emily, remembering the extreme emotion which St. Aubert had betrayed on the mention of the Marchioneſs, would now have ſuffered ſomething more than ſurpriſe,

had her confidence in his integrity been leſs; as it was, ſhe could not, for a moment, believe what the words of Laurentini inſinuated; yet ſhe ſtill felt ſtrongly intereſted, concerning them, and begged, that ſhe would explain them further.

"Do not urge me on that ſubject," ſaid the nun, "it is to me a terrible one! Would that I could blot it from my memory!" She ſighed deeply, and, after the pauſe of a moment, aſked Emily, by what means ſhe had diſcovered her name?

"By your portrait in the caſtle of Udolpho, to which this miniature bears a ſtriking reſemblance," replied Emily.

"You have been at Udolpho, then!" ſaid the nun, with great emotion. "Alas! what ſcenes does the mention of it revive in my fancy—ſcenes of happineſs—of ſuffering—and of horror!"

At this moment, the terrible ſpectacle, which Emily had witneſſed in a chamber of that caſtle, occurred to her, and ſhe ſhuddered, while ſhe looked upon the nun—

and recollected her late words—that "years of prayer and penitence could not wash out the foulneſs of murder." She was now compelled to attribute theſe to another cauſe, than that of delirium. With a degree of horror, that almoſt deprived her of ſenſe, ſhe now believed ſhe looked upon a murderer; all the recollected behaviour of Laurentini ſeemed to confirm the ſuppoſition, yet Emily was ſtill loſt in a labyrinth of perplexities, and, not knowing how to aſk the queſtions, which might lead to truth, ſhe could only hint them in broken ſentences.

"Your ſudden departure from Udolpho"—ſaid ſhe.

Laurentini groaned.

"The reports that followed it," continued Emily—"The weſt chamber—the mourning veil—the object it conceals!—when murders are committed—"

The nun ſhrieked, "What! there again!" ſaid ſhe, endeavouring to raiſe herſelf, while her ſtarting eyes ſeemed to follow ſome

object

object round the room—" Come from the grave! What! Blood—blood too!—There was no blood—thou canſt not ſay it!—Nay, do not ſmile,—do not ſmile ſo piteouſly!"

Laurentini fell into convulſions, as ſhe uttered the laſt words; and Emily, unable any longer to endure the horror of the ſcene, hurried from the room, and ſent ſome nuns to the aſſiſtance of the abbeſs.

The Lady Blanche, and the boarders, who were in the parlour, now aſſembled round Emily, and, alarmed by her manner and affrighted countenance, aſked a hundred queſtions, which ſhe avoided anſwering further, than by ſaying, that ſhe believed ſiſter Agnes was dying. They received this as a ſufficient explanation of her terror, and had then leiſure to offer reſtoratives, which, at length, ſomewhat revived Emily, whoſe mind was, however, ſo much ſhocked with terrible ſurmiſes, and perplexed with doubts by ſome words from the nun, that ſhe was

unable to converſe, and would have left the convent immediately, had ſhe not wiſhed to know whether Laurentini would ſurvive the late attack. After waiting ſome time, ſhe was informed, that, the convulſions having ceaſed, Laurentini ſeemed to be reviving, and Emily and Blanche were departing, when the abbeſs appeared, who, drawing the former aſide, ſaid ſhe had ſomething of conſequence to ſay to her, but, as it was late, ſhe would not detain her then, and requeſted to ſee her on the following day.

Emily promiſed to viſit her, and, having taken leave, returned with the Lady Blanche towards the chateau, on the way to which the deep gloom of the woods made Blanche lament that the evening was ſo far advanced; for the ſurrounding ſtillneſs and obſcurity rendered her ſenſible of fear, though there was a ſervant to protect her; while Emily was too much engaged by the horrors of the ſcene ſhe had juſt witneſſed, to be affected by the ſolemnity of the ſhades, otherwiſe than

than as they ſerved to promote her gloomy reverie, from which, however, ſhe was at length recalled by the Lady Blanche, who pointed out, at ſome diſtance, in the duſky path they were winding, two perſons ſlowly advancing. It was impoſſible to avoid them without ſtriking into a ſtill more ſecluded part of the wood, whither the ſtrangers might eaſily follow; but all apprehenſion vaniſhed, when Emily diſtinguiſhed the voice of Monſ. Du Pont, and perceived, that his companion was the gentleman, whom ſhe had ſeen at the monaſtery, and who was now converſing with ſo much earneſtneſs as not immediately to perceive their approach. When Du Pont joined the ladies, the ſtranger took leave, and they proceeded to the chateau, where the Count, when he heard of Monſ. Bonnac, claimed him for an acquaintance, and, on learning the melancholy occaſion of his viſit to Languedoc, and that he was lodged at a ſmall inn in the village, begged the favour of

Monſ. Du Pont to invite him to the chateau.

The latter was happy to do ſo, and the ſcruples of reſerve, which made M. Bonnac heſitate to accept the invitation, being at length overcome, they went to the chateau, where the kindneſs of the Count and the ſprightlineſs of his ſon were exerted to diſſipate the gloom, that overhung the ſpirits of the ſtranger. M. Bonnac was an officer in the French ſervice, and appeared to be about fifty; his figure was tall and commanding, his manners had received the laſt poliſh, and there was ſomething in his countenance uncommonly intereſting; for over features, which, in youth, muſt have been remarkably handſome, was ſpread a melancholy, that ſeemed the effect of long misfortune, rather than of conſtitution, or temper.

The converſation he held, during ſupper, was evidently an effort of politeneſs, and there were intervals in which, unable to ſtruggle

ſtruggle againſt the feelings, that depreſſed him, he relapſed into ſilence and abſtraction, from which, however, the Count ſometimes withdrew him in a manner ſo delicate and benevolent, that Emily, while ſhe obſerved him, almoſt fancied ſhe beheld her late father.

The party ſeparated, at an early hour, and then, in the ſolitude of her apartment, the ſcenes, which Emily had lately witneſſed, returned to her fancy, with dreadful energy. That in the dying nun ſhe ſhould have diſcovered Signora Laurentini, who, inſtead of having been murdered by Montoni, was, as it now ſeemed, herſelf guilty of ſome dreadful crime, excited both horror and ſurpriſe in a high degree; nor did the hints, which ſhe had dropped, reſpecting the marriage of the Marchioneſs de Villeroi, and the enquiries ſhe had made concerning Emily's birth, occaſion her a leſs degree of intereſt, though it was of a different nature.

The hiſtory, which ſiſter Frances had for-

merly related, and had ſaid to be that of Agnes, it now appeared, was erroneous; but for what purpoſe it had been fabricated, unleſs the more effectually to conceal the true ſtory, Emily could not even gueſs. Above all, her intereſt was excited as to the relation, which the ſtory of the late Marchioneſs de Villeroi bore to that of her father; for, that ſome kind of relation exiſted between them, the grief of St. Aubert, upon hearing her name, his requeſt to be buried near her, and her picture, which had been found among his papers, certainly proved. Sometimes it occurred to Emily, that he might have been the lover, to whom it was ſaid the Marchioneſs was attached, when ſhe was compelled to marry the Marquis de Villeroi; but that he had afterwards cheriſhed a paſſion for her, ſhe could not ſuffer herſelf to believe, for a moment. The papers, which he had ſo ſolemnly enjoined her to deſtroy, ſhe now fancied had related to this connection, and ſhe wiſhed more earneſtly than before to know the reaſons,

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that made him conſider the injunction neceſſary, which, had her faith in his principles been leſs, would have led to believe, that there was a myſtery in her birth diſhonourable to her parents, which thoſe manuſcripts might have revealed.

Reflections, ſimilar to theſe, engaged her mind, during the greater part of the night, and when, at length, ſhe fell into a ſlumber, it was only to behold a viſion of the dying nun, and to awaken in horrors, like thoſe ſhe had witneſſed.

On the following morning, ſhe was too much indiſpoſed to attend her appointment with the abbeſs, and, before the day concluded, ſhe heard, that ſiſter Agnes was no more. Monſ. Bonnac received this intelligence with concern; but Emily obſerved, that he did not appear ſo much affected now, as on the preceding evening, immediately after quitting the apartment of the nun, whoſe death was probably leſs terrible to him, than the confeſſion he had been then called upon to witneſs. However this

might be, he was perhaps conſoled, in ſome degree, by a knowledge of the legacy bequeathed him, ſince his family was large, and the extravagance of ſome part of it had lately been the means of involving him in great diſtreſs, and even in the horrors of a priſon; and it was the grief he had ſuffered from the wild career of a favourite ſon, with the pecuniary anxieties and misfortunes conſequent upon it, that had given to his countenance the air of dejection which had ſo much intereſted Emily.

To his friend Monſ. Du Pont he recited ſome particulars of his late ſufferings, when it appeared, that he had been confined for ſeveral months in one of the priſons of Paris, with little hope of releaſe, and without the comfort of ſeeing his wife, who had been abſent in the country, endeavouring, though in vain, to procure aſſiſtance from his friends. When, at length, ſhe had obtained an order for admittance, ſhe was ſo much ſhocked at the change, which long confine-

confinement and ſorrow had made in his appearance, that ſhe was ſeized with fits, which, by their long continuance, threatened her life.

" Our ſituation affected thoſe who happened to witneſs it," continued Monſ. Bonnac, " and one generous friend, who was in confinement at the ſame time, afterwards employed the firſt moments of his liberty in efforts to obtain mine. He ſucceeded: the heavy debt, that oppreſſed me, was diſcharged; and, when I would have expreſſed my ſenſe of the obligation I had received, my benefactor was fled from my ſearch. I have reaſon to believe he was the victim of his own generoſity, and that he returned to the ſtate of confinement from which he had releaſed me; but every enquiry after him was unſucceſsful. Amiable and unfortunate Valancourt!"

"Valancourt!" exclaimed Monſ. Du Pont. " Of what family?"

" The Valancourts, Counts Duvarney," replied Monſ. Bonnac.

The emotion of Monſ. Du Pont, when he diſcovered the generous benefactor of his friend to be the rival of his love, can only be imagined; but, having overcome his firſt ſurpriſe, he diſſipated the apprehenſions of Monſ. Bonnac, by acquainting him, that Valancourt was at liberty, and had lately been in Languedoc; after which his affection for Emily prompted him to make ſome enquiries, reſpecting the conduct of his rival, during his ſtay at Paris, of which M. Bonnac appeared to be well informed. The anſwers he received were ſuch as convinced him, that Valancourt had been much miſrepreſented, and, painful as was the ſacrifice, he formed the juſt deſign of relinquiſhing his purſuit of Emily to a lover, who, it now appeared, was not unworthy of the regard with which ſhe honoured him.

The converſation of Monſ. Bonnac diſcovered, that Valancourt, ſome time after his arrival at Paris, had been drawn into the ſnares, which determined vice had ſpread for

for him, and that his hours had been chiefly divided between the parties of the captivating Marchioneſs and thoſe gaming aſſemblies, to which the envy, or the avarice, of his brother officers had ſpared no art to ſeduce him. In theſe parties he had loſt large ſums, in efforts to recover ſmall ones, and to ſuch loſſes the Count de Villefort and M. Henri had been frequent witneſſes. His reſources were, at length, exhauſted; and the Count, his brother, exaſperated by his conduct, refuſed to continue the ſupplies neceſſary to his preſent mode of life, when Valancourt, in conſequence of accumulated debts, was thrown into confinement, where his brother ſuffered him to remain, in the hope that puniſhment might effect a reform of conduct, which had not yet been confirmed by long habit.

In the ſolitude of his priſon, Valancourt had leiſure for reflection, and cauſe for repentance; here, too, the image of Emily, which, amidſt the diſſipation of the city, had been obſcured, but never obliterated from

from his heart, revived with all the charms of innocence and beauty, to reproach him for having ſacrificed his happineſs and debaſed his talents by purſuits, which his nobler faculties would formerly have taught him to conſider were as taſteleſs as they were degrading. But, though his paſſions had been ſeduced, his heart was not depraved, nor had habit riveted the chains, that hung heavily on his conſcience; and, as he retained that energy of will, which was neceſſary to burſt them, he, at length, emancipated himſelf from the bondage of vice, but not till after much effort and ſevere ſuffering.

Being releaſed by his brother from the priſon, where he had witneſſed the affecting meeting between Monſ. Bonnac and his wife, with whom he had been for ſome me acquainted, the firſt uſe of his liberty formed a ſtriking inſtance of his humanity and his raſhneſs; for with nearly all the money, juſt received from his brother, he went to a gaming-houſe, and gave it as a laſt ſtake

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for the chance of reſtoring his friend to freedom, and to his afflicted family. The event was fortunate, and, while he had awaited the iſſue of this momentous ſtake, he made a ſolemn vow never again to yield to the deſtructive and faſcinating vice of gaming.

Having reſtored the venerable Monſ. Bonnac to his rejoicing family, he hurried from Paris to Eſtuviere; and, in the delight of having made the wretched happy, forgot, for a while, his own misfortunes. Soon, however, he remembered that he had thrown away the fortune, without which he could never hope to marry Emily; and life, unleſs paſſed with her, now ſcarcely appeared ſupportable; for her goodneſs, refinement, and ſimplicity of heart, rendered her beauty more enchanting, if poſſible, to his fancy, than it had ever yet appeared. Experience had taught him to underſtand the full value of the qualities, which he had before admired, but which the contraſted characters he had ſeen in the world made

made him now adore; and theſe reflections, increaſing the pangs of remorſe and regret, occaſioned the deep dejection, that had accompanied him even into the preſence of Emily, of whom he conſidered himſelf no longer worthy. To the ignominy of having received pecuniary obligations from the Marchioneſs Chamfort, or any other lady of intrigue, as the Count de Villefort had been informed, or of having been engaged in the depredating ſchemes of gameſters, Valancourt had never ſubmitted; and theſe were ſome of ſuch ſcandals as often mingle with truth, againſt the unfortunate. Count De Villefort had received them from authority, which he had no reaſon to doubt, and which the imprudent conduct he had himſelf witneſſed in Valancourt, had certainly induced him the more readily to believe. Being ſuch as Emily could not name to the Chevalier, he had no opportunity of refuting them; and, when he confeſſed himſelf to be unworthy of her eſteem, he little ſuſpected, that he was confirming to her the moſt dread-

dreadful calumnies. Thus the miſtake had been mutual, and had remained ſo, when Monſ. Bonnac explained the conduct of his generous, but imprudent young friend to Du Pont, who, with ſevere juſtice, determined not only to undeceive the Count on this ſubject, but to reſign all hope of Emily. Such a ſacrifice as his love rendered this, was deſerving of a noble reward, and Monſ. Bonnac, if it had been poſſible for him to forget the benevolent Valancourt, would have wiſhed that Emily might accept the juſt Du Pont.

When the Count was informed of the error he had committed, he was extremely ſhocked at the conſequence of his credulity, and the account which Monſ. Bonnac gave of his friend's ſituation, while at Paris, convinced him, that Valancourt had been entrapped by the ſchemes of a ſet of diſſipated young men, with whom his profeſſion had partly obliged him to aſſociate, rather than by an inclination to vice; and, charmed by the humanity, and noble, though raſh

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generoſity, which his conduct towards Monſ. Bonnac exhibited, he forgave him the tranſient errors, that had ſtained his youth, and reſtored him to the high degree of eſteem, with which he had regarded him, during their early acquaintance. But, as the leaſt reparation he could now make Valancourt was to afford him an opportunity of explaining to Emily his former conduct, he immediately wrote, to requeſt his forgiveneſs of the unintentional injury he had done him, and to invite him to Chateau-le-Blanc. Motives of delicacy with-held the Count from informing Emily of this letter, and of kindneſs from acquainting her with the diſcovery reſpecting Valancourt, till his arrival ſhould ſave her from the poſſibility of anxiety, as to its event; and this precaution ſpared her even ſeverer inquietude than the Count had foreſeen, ſince he was ignorant of the ſymptoms of deſpair which Valancourt's late conduct had betrayed.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

. . . . . " But in theſe caſes,
We ſtill have judgment here ; that we but teach
Bloody inſtructions, which, being taught, return
To plague the inventor: thus even-handed juſtice
Commends the ingredients of our poiſon'd chalice
To our own lips."

MACBETH.

SOME circumſtances of an extraordinary nature now withdrew Emily from her own ſorrows, and excited emotions, which partook of both ſurpriſe and horror.

A few days following that on which Signora Laurentini died her will was opened at the monaſtery, in the preſence of the ſuperiors and Monſ. Bonnac, when it was found, that one third of her perſonal property was bequeathed to the neareſt ſurviving relative of the late Marchioneſs de Villeroi, and that Emily was the perſon.

With the ſecret of Emily's family the abbeſs had long been acquainted, and it was

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in obſervance of the earneſt requeſt of St. Aubert, who was known to the friar, that attended him on his death-bed, that his daughter had remained in ignorance of her relationſhip to the Marchioneſs. But ſome hints, which had fallen from Signora Laurentini, during her laſt interview with Emily, and a confeſſion of a very extraordinary nature, given in her dying hours, had made the abbeſs think it neceſſary to converſe with her young friend on the topic ſhe had not before ventured to introduce; and it was for this purpoſe, that ſhe had requeſted to ſee her on the morning that followed her interview with the nun. Emily's indiſpoſition had then prevented the intended converſation; but now, after the will had been examined, ſhe received a ſummons, which ſhe immediately obeyed, and became informed of circumſtances that powerfully affected her. As the narrative of the abbeſs was, however, deficient in many particulars, of which the reader may wiſh to be informed, and the hiſtory of the nun is materially

terially connected with the fate of the Marchioneſs de Villeroi, we ſhall omit the converſation, that paſſed in the parlour of the convent, and mingle with our relation a brief hiſtory of

LAURENTINI DI UDOLPHO,

who was the only child of her parents, and heireſs of the ancient houſe of Udolpho, in the territory of Venice. It was the firſt misfortune of her life, and that which led to all her ſucceeding miſery, that the friends, who ought to have reſtrained her ſtrong paſſions, and mildly inſtructed her in the art of governing them, nurtured them by early indulgence. But they cheriſhed their own failings in her; for their conduct was not the reſult of rational kindneſs, and, when they either indulged, or oppoſed the paſſions of their child, they gratified their own. Thus they indulged her with weakneſs, and reprehended her with violence; her ſpirit was exaſperated by their vehemence, inſtead of being corrected by their wiſdom;

wiſdom; and their oppoſitions became conteſts for victory, in which the due tenderneſs of the parents, and the affectionate duties of the child, were equally forgotten; but, as returning fondneſs diſarmed the parents' reſentment ſooneſt, Laurentini was ſuffered to believe that ſhe had conquered, and her paſſions became ſtronger by every effort, that had been employed to ſubdue them.

The death of her father and mother in the ſame year left her to her own diſcretion, under the dangerous circumſtances attendant on youth and beauty. She was fond of company, delighted with admiration, yet diſdainful of the opinion of the world, when it happened to contradict her inclinations; had a gay and brilliant wit, and was miſtreſs of all the arts of faſcination. Her conduct was ſuch as might have been expected, from the weakneſs of her principles and the ſtrength of her paſſions.

Among her numerous admirers was the late Marquis de Villeroi, who, on his tour through

through Italy, ſaw Laurentini at Venice, where ſhe uſually reſided, and became her paſſionate adorer. Equally captivated by the figure and accompliſhments of the Marquis, who was at that period one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed noblemen of the French court, ſhe had the art ſo effectually to conceal from him the dangerous traits of her character and the blemiſhes of her late conduct, that he ſolicited her hand in marriage.

Before the nuptials were concluded, ſhe retired to the caſtle of Udolpho, whither the Marquis followed, and where her conduct, relaxing from the propriety, which ſhe had lately aſſumed, diſcovered to him the precipice, on which he ſtood. A minuter enquiry than he had before thought it neceſſary to make, convinced him, that he had been deceived in her character, and ſhe, whom he had deſigned for his wife, afterwards became his miſtreſs.

Having paſſed ſome weeks at Udolpho, he was called abruptly to France, whither

he returned with extreme reluctance, for his heart was ſtill faſcinated by the arts of Laurentini, with whom, however, he had on various pretences delayed his marriage; but, to reconcile her to this ſeparation, he now gave repeated promiſes of returning to conclude the nuptials, as ſoon as the affair, which thus ſuddenly called him to France, ſhould permit.

Soothed, in ſome degree, by theſe aſſurances, ſhe ſuffered him to depart; and, ſoon after, her relative, Montoni, arriving at Udolpho, renewed the addreſſes which ſhe had before refuſed, and which ſhe now again rejected. Meanwhile, her thoughts were conſtantly with the Marquis de Villeroi, for whom ſhe ſuffered all the delirium of Italian love, cheriſhed by the ſolitude, to which ſhe confined herſelf; for ſhe had now loſt all taſte for the pleaſures of ſociety and the gaiety of amuſement. Her only indulgences were to ſigh and weep over a miniature of the Marquis; to viſit the ſcenes, that had witneſſed their happineſs;

to pour forth her heart to him in writing, and to count the weeks, the days, which muſt intervene before the period that he had mentioned as probable for his return. But this period paſſed without bringing him; and week after week followed in heavy and almoſt intolerable expectation. During this interval, Laurentini's fancy, occupied inceſſantly by one idea, became diſordered; and, her whole heart being devoted to one object, life became hateful to her, when ſhe believed that object loſt.

Several months paſſed, during which ſhe heard nothing from the Marquis de Villeroi, and her days were marked, at intervals, with the phrenſy of paſſion and the ſullenneſs of deſpair. She ſecluded herſelf from all viſitors, and, ſometimes, remained in her apartment, for weeks together, refuſing to ſpeak to every perſon, except her favourite female attendant, writing ſcraps of letters, reading, again and again, thoſe ſhe had received from the Marquis,

weeping over his picture, and ſpeaking to it, for many hours, upbraiding, reproaching and careſſing it alternately.

At length, a report reached her, that the Marquis had married in France, and, after ſuffering all the extremes of love, jealouſy and indignation, ſhe formed the deſperate reſolution of going ſecretly to that country, and, if the report proved true, of attempting a deep revenge. To her favourite woman only ſhe confided the plan of her journey, and ſhe engaged her to partake of it. Having collected her jewels, which, deſcending to her from many branches of her family, were of immenſe value, and all her caſh, to a very large amount, they were packed in a trunk, which was privately conveyed to a neighbouring town, whither Laurentini, with this only ſervant, followed, and thence proceeded ſecretly to Leghorn, where they embarked for France.

When, on her arrival in Languedoc, ſhe found, that the Marquis de Villeroi had been

been married, for ſome months, her deſpair almoſt deprived her of reaſon, and ſhe alternately projected and abandoned the horrible deſign of murdering the Marquis, his wife and herſelf. At length ſhe contrived to throw herſelf in his way, with an intention of reproaching him, for his conduct, and of ſtabbing herſelf in his preſence; but, when ſhe again ſaw him, who ſo long had been the conſtant object of her thoughts and affections, reſentment yielded to love; her reſolution failed; ſhe trembled with the conflict of emotions, that aſſailed her heart, and fainted away.

The Marquis was not proof againſt her beauty and ſenſibility; all the energy, with which he had firſt loved, returned, for his paſſion had been reſiſted by prudence, rather than overcome by indifference; and, ſince the honour of his family would not permit him to marry her, he had endeavoured to ſubdue his love, and had ſo far ſucceeded, as to ſelect the then Marchioneſs for his wife, whom he loved at firſt with a

tempered and rational affection. But the mild virtues of that amiable lady did not recompenſe him for her indifference, which appeared, notwithſtanding her efforts to conceal it; and he had, for ſome time, ſuſpected that her affections were engaged by another perſon, when Laurentini arrived in Languedoc. This artful Italian ſoon perceived, that ſhe had regained her influence over him, and, ſoothed by the diſcovery, ſhe determined to live, and to employ all her enchantments to win his conſent to the diabolical deed, which ſhe believed was neceſſary to the ſecurity of her happineſs. She conducted her ſcheme with deep diſſimulation and patient perſeverance, and, having completely eſtranged the affections of the Marquis from his wife, whoſe gentle goodneſs and unimpaſſioned manners had ceaſed to pleaſe, when contraſted with the captivations of the Italian, ſhe proceeded to awaken in his mind the jealouſy of pride, for it was no longer that of love, and even pointed out to him the perſon, to whom ſhe

ſhe affirmed the Marchioneſs had ſacrificed her honour; but Laurentini had firſt extorted from him a ſolemn promiſe to forbear avenging himſelf upon his rival. This was an important part of her plan, for ſhe knew, that, if his deſire of vengeance was reſtrained towards one party, it would burn more fiercely towards the other, and he might then, perhaps, be prevailed on to aſſiſt in the horrible act, which would releaſe him from the only barrier, that withheld him from making her his wife.

The innocent Marchioneſs, meanwhile, obſerved, with extreme grief, the alteration in her huſband's manners. He became reſerved and thoughtful in her preſence; his conduct was auſtere, and ſometimes even rude; and he left her, for many hours together, to weep for his unkindneſs, and to form plans for the recovery of his affection. His conduct afflicted her the more, becauſe, in obedience to the command of her father, ſhe had accepted his hand, though her affections were engaged to ano-

ther, whoſe amiable diſpoſition, ſhe had reaſon to believe, would have enſured her happineſs. This circumſtance Laurentini had diſcovered, ſoon after her arrival in France, and had made ample uſe of it in aſſiſting her deſigns upon the Marquis, to whom ſhe adduced ſuch ſeeming proof of his wife's infidelity, that, in the frantic rage of wounded honour, he conſented to deſtroy his wife. A ſlow poiſon was adminiſtered, and ſhe fell a victim to the jealouſy and ſubtlety of Laurentini and to the guilty weakneſs of her huſband.

But the moment of Laurentini's triumph, the moment, to which ſhe had looked forward for the completion of all her wiſhes, proved only the commencement of a ſuffering, that never left her to her dying hour.

The paſſion of revenge, which had in part ſtimulated her to the commiſſion of this atrocious deed, died, even at the moment when it was gratified, and left her to the horrors of unavailing pity and remorſe, which would probably have empoiſoned all the

years

years ſhe had promiſed herſelf with the Marquis de Villeroi, had her expectations of an alliance with him been realized. But he, too, had found the moment of his revenge to be that of remorſe, as to himſelf, and deteſtation, as to the partner of his crime; the feeling, which he had miſtaken for conviction, was no more; and he ſtood aſtoniſhed, and aghaſt, that no proof remained of his wife's infidelity, now that ſhe had ſuffered the puniſhment of guilt. Even when he was informed, that ſhe was dying, he had felt ſuddenly and unaccountably reaſſured of her innocence, nor was the ſolemn aſſurance ſhe made him in her laſt hour, capable of affording him a ſtronger conviction of her blameleſs conduct.

In the firſt horrors of remorſe and deſpair, he felt inclined to deliver up himſelf and the woman, who had plunged him into this abyſs of guilt, into the hands of juſtice; but, when the paroxyſm of his ſuffering was over, his intention changed. Laurentini, however, he ſaw only once afterwards, and

that was, to curſe her as the inſtigator of his crime, and to ſay, that he ſpared her life only on condition, that ſhe paſſed the reſt of her days in prayer and penance. Overwhelmed with diſappointment, on receiving contempt and abhorrence from the man, for whoſe ſake ſhe had not ſcrupled to ſtain her conſcience with human blood, and, touched with horror of the unavailing crime ſhe had committed, ſhe renounced the world, and retired to the monaſtery of St. Claire, a dreadful victim to unreſiſted paſſion.

The Marquis, immediately after the death of his wife, quitted Chateau-le-Blanc, to which he never returned, and endeavoured to loſe the ſenſe of his crime amidſt the tumult of war, or the diſſipations of a capital; but his efforts were vain; a deep dejection hung over him ever after, for which his moſt intimate friends could not account, and he, at length, died, with a degree of horror nearly equal to that, which Laurentini had ſuffered. The phyſician, who had obſerved the ſingular appearance of the unfortunate

fortunate Marchioneſs, after death, had been bribed to ſilence; and, as the ſurmiſes of a few of the ſervants had proceeded no further than a whiſper, the affair had never been inveſtigated. Whether this whiſper ever reached the father of the Marchioneſs, and, if it did, whether the difficulty of obtaining proof deterred him from proſecuting the Marquis de Villeroi, is uncertain; but her death was deeply lamented by ſome part of her family, and particularly by her brother, M. St. Aubert; for that was the degree of relationſhip, which had exiſted between Emily's father and the Marchioneſs; and there is no doubt, that he ſuſpected the manner of her death. Many letters paſſed between the Marquis and him, ſoon after the deceaſe of his beloved ſiſter, the ſubject of which was not known, but there is reaſon to believe, that they related to the cauſe of her death; and theſe were the papers, together with ſome letters of the Marchioneſs, who had confided to her brother the occaſion of her unhappineſs, which St. Aubert had ſo

ſolemnly enjoined his daughter to deſtroy: and anxiety for her peace had probably made him forbid her to enquire into the melancholy ſtory, to which they alluded. Such, indeed, had been his affliction, on the premature death of this his favourite ſiſter, whoſe unhappy marriage had from the firſt excited his tendereſt pity, that he never could hear her named, or mention her himſelf after her death, except to Madame St. Aubert. From Emily, whoſe ſenſibility he feared to awaken, he had ſo carefully concealed her hiſtory and name, that ſhe was ignorant, till now, that ſhe ever had ſuch a relative as the Marchioneſs de Villeroi; and from this motive he had enjoined ſilence to his only ſurviving ſiſter, Madame Cheron, who had ſcrupulouſly obſerved his requeſt.

It was over ſome of the laſt pathetic letters of the Marchioneſs, that St. Aubert was weeping, when he was obſerved by Emily, on the eve of her departure from La Vallée, and it was her picture, which he had ſo tenderly careſſed. Her diſaſtrous death may

account

account for the emotion he had betrayed, on hearing her named by La Voiſin, and for his requeſt to be interred near the monument of the Villerois, where her remains were depoſited; but not thoſe of her huſband, who was buried, where he died, in the north of France.

The confeſſor, who attended St. Aubert in his laſt moments, recollected him to be the brother of the late Marchioneſs, when St. Aubert, from tenderneſs to Emily, had conjured him to conceal the circumſtance, and to requeſt that the abbeſs, to whoſe care he particularly recommended her, would do the ſame; a requeſt, which had been exactly obſerved.

Laurentini, on her arrival in France, had carefully concealed her name and family, and, the better to diſguiſe her real hiſtory, had, on entering the convent, cauſed the ſtory to be circulated, which had impoſed on ſiſter Frances, and it is probable, that the abbeſs, who did not preſide in the convent, at the time of her noviciation, was alſo en-

tirely ignorant of the truth. The deep remorſe, that ſeized on the mind of Laurentini, together with the ſufferings of diſappointed paſſion, for ſhe ſtill loved the Marquis, again unſettled her intellects, and, after the firſt paroxyſms of deſpair were paſſed, a heavy and ſilent melancholy had ſettled upon her ſpirits, which ſuffered few interruptions from fits of phrenſy, till the time of her death. During many years, it had been her only amuſement to walk in the woods near the monaſtery, in the ſolitary hours of night, and to play upon a favourite inſtrument, to which ſhe ſometimes joined the delightful melody of her voice, in the moſt ſolemn and melancholy airs of her native country, modulated by all the energetic feeling, that dwelt in her heart. The phyſician, who had attended her, recommended it to the ſuperior to indulge her in this whim, as the only means of ſoothing her diſtempered fancy; and ſhe was ſuffered to walk in the lonely hours of night, attended by the ſervant, who had accompanied her from Italy; but, as the indulgence tranſgreſſed againſt the rules

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of the convent, it was kept as ſecret as poſſible; and thus the myſterious muſic of Laurentini had combined with other circumſtances, to produce a report, that not only the chateau, but its neighbourhood, was haunted.

Soon after her entrance into this holy community, and before ſhe had ſhewn any ſymptoms of inſanity there, ſhe made a will, in which, after bequeathing a conſiderable legacy to the convent, ſhe divided the remainder of her perſonal property, which her jewels made very valuable, between the wife of Monſ. Bonnac, who was an Italian lady and her relation, and the neareſt ſurviving relative of the late Marchioneſs de Villeroi. As Emily St. Aubert was not only the neareſt, but the ſole relative, this legacy deſcended to her, and thus explained to her the whole myſtery of her father's conduct.

The reſemblance between Emily and her unfortunate aunt had frequently been obſerved by Laurentini, and had occaſioned the

the ſingular behaviour which had formerly alarmed her; but it was in the nun's dying hour, when her conſcience gave her perpetually the idea of the Marchioneſs, that ſhe became more ſenſible, than ever, of this likeneſs, and, in her phrenſy, deemed it no reſemblance of the perſon ſhe had injured, but the original herſelf. The bold aſſertion, that had followed, on the recovery of her ſenſes, that Emily was the daughter of the Marchioneſs de Villeroi, aroſe from a ſuſpicion that ſhe was ſo; for, knowing that her rival, when ſhe married the Marquis, was attached to another lover, ſhe had ſcarcely ſcrupled to believe, that her honour had been ſacrificed, like her own, to an unreſiſted paſſion.

Of a crime, however, to which Emily had ſuſpected, from her phrenſied confeſſion of murder, that ſhe had been inſtrumental in the caſtle of Udolpho, Laurentini was innocent; and ſhe had herſelf been deceived concerning the ſpectacle, that formerly occaſioned her ſo much terror, and had

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ſince compelled her, for a while, to attribute the horrors of the nun to a conſciouſneſs of a murder, committed in that caſtle.

It may be remembered, that, in a chamber of Udolpho, hung a black veil, whoſe ſingular ſituation had excited Emily's curioſity, and which afterwards diſcloſed an object that had overwhelmed her with horror; for, on lifting it, there appeared, inſtead of the picture ſhe had expected, within a receſs of the wall, a human figure of ghaſtly paleneſs, ſtretched at its length, and dreſſed in the habiliments of the grave. What added to the horror of the ſpectacle, was, that the face appeared partly decayed and disfigured by worms, which were viſible on the features and hands. On ſuch an object, it will be readily believed, that no perſon could endure to look twice. Emily, it may be recollected, had, after the firſt glance, let the veil drop, and her terror had prevented her from ever after provoking a renewal of ſuch ſuffering, as ſhe had then experienced.—

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Had ſhe dared to look again, her deluſion and her fears would have vaniſhed together, and ſhe would have perceived, that the figure before her was not human, but formed of wax. The hiſtory of it is ſomewhat extraordinary, though not without example in the records of that fierce ſeverity, which monkiſh ſuperſtition has ſometimes inflicted on mankind. A member of the houſe of Udolpho, having committed ſome offence againſt the prerogative of the church, had been condemned to the penance of contemplating, during certain hours of the day, a waxen image, made to reſemble a human body in the ſtate to which it is reduced after death. This penance, ſerving as a memento of the condition at which he muſt himſelf arrive, had been deſigned to reprove the pride of the Marquis of Udolpho, which had formerly ſo much exaſperated that of the Romiſh church; and he had not only ſuperſtitiouſly obſerved this penance himſelf, which, he had believed, was to obtain a pardon

pardon for all his ſins, but had made it a condition in his will, that his deſcendants ſhould preſerve the image, on pain of forfeiting to the church a certain part of his domain, that they alſo might profit by the humiliating moral it conveyed. The figure, therefore, had been ſuffered to retain its ſtation in the wall of the chamber, but his deſcendants excuſed themſelves from obſerving the penance, to which he had been enjoined.

This image was ſo horribly natural, that it is not ſurpriſing Emily ſhould have miſtaken it for the object it reſembled, nor, ſince ſhe had heard ſuch an extraordinary account, concerning the diſappearing of the late lady of the caſtle, and had ſuch experience of the character of Montoni, that ſhe ſhould have believed this to be the murdered body of the lady Laurentini, and that he had been the contriver of her death.

The ſituation, in which ſhe had diſcovered it, occaſioned her, at firſt, much ſurpriſe and perplexity; but the vigilance, with which

which the doors of the chamber, where it was depoſited, were afterwards ſecured, had compelled her to believe, that Montoni, not daring to confide the ſecret of her death to any perſon, had ſuffered her remains to decay in this obſcure chamber. The ceremony of the veil, however, and the circumſtance of the doors having been left open, even for a moment, had occaſioned her much wonder and ſome doubts; but theſe were not ſufficient to overcome her ſuſpicion of Montoni; and it was the dread of his terrible vengeance, that had ſealed her lips in ſilence, concerning what ſhe had ſeen in the weſt chamber.

Emily, in diſcovering the Marchioneſs de Villeroi to have been the ſiſter of Monſ. St. Aubert, was variouſly affected; but, amidſt the ſorrow, which ſhe ſuffered for her untimely death, ſhe was releaſed from an anxious and painful conjecture, occaſioned by the raſh aſſertion of Signora Laurentini, concerning her birth and the honour of her parents. Her faith in St. Aubert's prin-

principles would ſcarcely allow her to ſuſpect that he had acted diſhonourably; and ſhe felt ſuch reluctance to believe herſelf the daughter of any other, than her, whom ſhe had always conſidered and loved as a mother, that ſhe would hardly admit ſuch a circumſtance to be poſſible; yet the likeneſs, which it had frequently been affirmed ſhe bore to the late Marchioneſs, the former behaviour of Dorothée the old houſekeeper, the aſſertion of Laurentini, and the myſterious attachment which St. Aubert had diſcovered, awakened doubts as to his connection with the Marchioneſs, which her reaſon could neither vanquiſh, or confirm. From theſe, however, ſhe was now relieved, and all the circumſtances of her father's conduct were fully explained; but her heart was oppreſſed by the melancholy cataſtrophe of her amiable relative, and by the awful leſſon, which the hiſtory of the nun exhibited, the indulgence of whoſe paſſions had been the means of leading her gradually to the commiſſion of a crime, from the pro-

phecy

phecy of which in her early years ſhe would have recoiled in horror, and exclaimed—that it could not be !—a crime, which whole years of repentance and of the ſevereſt penance had not been able to obliterate from her conſcience.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

. . . . . "Then, freſh tears
Stood on her cheek, as doth the honey-dew
Upon a gather'd lily almoſt wither'd."

SHAKESPEARE.

AFTER the late diſcoveries, Emily was diſtinguiſhed at the chateau by the Count and his family, as a relative of the houſe of Villeroi, and received, if poſſible, more friendly attention, than had yet been ſhewn her.

Count de Villefort's ſurpriſe at the delay of an anſwer to his letter, which had been directed to Valancourt at Eſtuviere, was mingled with ſatisfaction for the prudence, which had ſaved Emily from a ſhare of the anxiety he now ſuffered, though, when he ſaw her ſtill drooping under the effect of his former

former error, all his reſolution was neceſſary to reſtrain him from relating the truth, that would afford her a momentary relief. The approaching nuptials of the Lady Blanche now divided his attention with this ſubject of his anxiety, for the inhabitants of the chateau were already buſied in preparations for that event, and the arrival of Monſ. St. Foix was daily expected. In the gaiety, which ſurrounded her, Emily vainly tried to participate, her ſpirits being depreſſed by the late diſcoveries, and by the anxiety concerning the fate of Valancourt, that had been occaſioned by the deſcription of his manner, when he had delivered the ring. She ſeemed to perceive in it the gloomy wildneſs of deſpair; and, when ſhe conſidered to what that deſpair might have urged him, her heart ſunk with terror and grief. The ſtate of ſuſpenſe, as to his ſafety, to which ſhe believed herſelf condemned, till ſhe ſhould return to La Vallée, appeared inſupportable, and, in ſuch moments, ſhe

could not even ſtruggle to aſſume the compoſure, that had left her mind, but would often abruptly quit the company ſhe was with, and endeavour to ſooth her ſpirits in the deep ſolitudes of the woods, that overbrowed the ſhore. Here, the faint roar of foaming waves, that beat below, and the ſullen murmur of the wind among the branches around, were circumſtances in uniſon with the temper of her mind; and ſhe would ſit on a cliff, or on the broken ſteps of her favourite watch-tower, obſerving the changing colours of the evening clouds, and the gloom of twilight draw over the ſea, till the white tops of billows, riding towards the ſhore, could ſcarcely be diſcerned amidſt the darkened waters. The lines, engraved by Valancourt on this tower, ſhe frequently repeated with melancholy enthuſiaſm, and then would endeavour to check the recollections and the grief they occaſioned, and to turn her thoughts to indifferent ſubjects.

One evening, having wandered with her lute

lute to this her favourite ſpot, ſhe entered the ruined tower, and aſcended a winding ſtair-caſe, that led to a ſmall chamber, which was leſs decayed than the reſt of the building, and whence ſhe had often gazed, with admiration, on the wide proſpect of ſea and land, that extended below. The ſun was now ſetting on that tract of the Pyrenées, which divides Languedoc from Rouſillon, and, placing herſelf oppoſite to a ſmall grated window, which, like the wood tops beneath, and the waves lower ſtill, gleamed with the red glow of the weſt, ſhe touched the chords of her lute in ſolemn ſymphony, and then accompanied it with her voice, in one of the ſimple and affecting airs, to which, in happier days, Valancourt had often liſtened in rapture, and which ſhe now adapted to the following lines.

TO MELANCHOLY.

Spirit of love and ſorrow—hail!
Thy ſolemn voice from far I hear,
Mingling with ev'ning's dying gale:
Hail, with this ſadly-pleaſing tear!

O! at this ſtill, this lonely hour,
Thine own ſweet hour of cloſing day,
Awake thy lute, whoſe charmful pow'r
Shall call up Fancy to obey,

To paint the wild romantic dream,
That meets the poet's muſing eye,
As, on the bank of ſhadowy ſtream,
He breathes to her the fervid ſigh.

O lonely ſpirit! let thy ſong
Lead me through all thy ſacred haunt;
The minſter's moon-light aiſles along,
Where ſpectres raiſe the midnight chaunt.

I hear their dirges faintly ſwell!
Then, ſink at once in ſilence drear,
While, from the pillar'd cloiſter's cell,
Dimly their gliding forms appear!

Lead where the pine-woods wave on high,
Whoſe pathleſs ſod is darkly ſeen,
As the cold moon, with trembling eye,
Darts her long beams the leaves between.

Lead to the mountain's duſky head,
Where, far below, in ſhade profound,
Wide foreſts, plains and hamlets ſpread,
And ſad the chimes of veſper ſound.

Or guide me where the daſhing oar
Juſt breaks the ſtillneſs of the vale,
As ſlow it tracks the winding ſhore,
To meet the ocean's diſtant ſail:

To pebbly banks, that Neptune laves,
With meaſur'd ſurges, loud and deep,
Where the dark cliff bends o'er the waves,
And wild the winds of autumn ſweep:

There pauſe at midnight's ſpectred hour,
And liſt the long-reſounding gale:
And catch the fleeting moon-light's pow'r,
O'er foaming ſeas and diſtant ſail.

The ſoft tranquillity of the ſcene below, where the evening breeze ſcarcely curled the water, or ſwelled the paſſing ſail, that caught

caught the laſt gleam of the ſun, and where, now and then, a dipping oar was all that diſturbed the trembling radiance, conſpired with the tender melody of her lute to lull her mind into a ſtate of gentle ſadneſs, and ſhe ſung the mournful ſongs of paſt times, till the remembrances they awakened were too powerful for her heart, her tears fell upon the lute, over which ſhe drooped, and her voice trembled, and was unable to proceed.

Though the ſun had now ſunk behind the mountains, and even his reflected light was fading from their higheſt points, Emily did not leave the watch tower, but continued to indulge her melancholy reverie, till a footſtep, at a little diſtance, ſtartled her, and, on looking through the grate, ſhe obſerved a perſon walking below, whom, however, ſoon perceiving to be Monſ. Bonnac, ſhe returned to the quiet thoughtfulneſs his ſtep had interrupted. After ſome time, ſhe again ſtruck her lute, and ſung her favourite air; but again a ſtep diſturbed her,

and, as ſhe pauſed to liſten, ſhe heard it aſcending the ſtair-caſe of the tower. The gloom of the hour, perhaps, made her ſenſible to ſome degree of fear, which ſhe might not otherwiſe have felt; for, only a few minutes before, ſhe had ſeen Monſ. Bonnac paſs. The ſteps were quick and bounding, and, in the next moment, the door of the chamber opened, and a perſon entered, whoſe features were veiled in the obſcurity of twilight; but his voice could not be concealed, for it was the voice of Valancourt! At the ſound, never heard by Emily without emotion, ſhe ſtarted, in terror, aſtoniſhment and doubtful pleaſure, and had ſcarcely beheld him at her feet, when ſhe ſunk into a ſeat, overcome by the various emotions, that contended at her heart, and almoſt inſenſible to that voice, whoſe earneſt and trembling calls ſeemed as if endeavouring to ſave her. Valancourt, as he hung over Emily, deplored his own raſh impatience, in having thus ſurpriſed her: for when he had arrived at the chateau,

too

too anxious to await the return of the Count, who, he underſtood, was in the grounds, he went himſelf to ſeek him, when, as he paſſed the tower, he was ſtruck by the ſound of Emily's voice, and immediately aſcended.

It was a conſiderable time before ſhe revived, but, when her recollection returned, ſhe repulſed his attentions, with an air of reſerve, and enquired, with as much diſpleaſure as it was poſſible ſhe could feel in theſe firſt moments of his appearance, the occaſion of his viſit.

"Ah Emily!" ſaid Valancourt, "that air, thoſe words—alas! I have, then, little to hope—when you ceaſed to eſteem me, you ceaſed alſo to love me!"

"Moſt true, ſir," replied Emily, endeavouring to command her trembling voice; "and if you had valued my eſteem, you would not have given me this new occaſion for uneaſineſs."

Valancourt's countenance changed ſuddenly from the anxieties of doubt to an ex-

preſſion of ſurpriſe and diſmay: he was ſilent a moment, and then ſaid, "I had been taught to hope for a very different reception! Is it, then, true, Emily, that I have loſt your regard, for ever? am I to believe, that though your eſteem for me may return—your affection never can? Can the Count have meditated the cruelty, which now tortures me with a ſecond death?"

The voice, in which he ſpoke this, alarmed Emily as much as his words ſurpriſed her, and, with trembling impatience, ſhe begged that he would explain them.

"Can any explanation be neceſſary?" ſaid Valancourt, "do you not know how cruelly my conduct has been miſrepreſented? that the actions of which you once believed me guilty (and, O Emily! how could you ſo degrade me in your opinion, even for a moment!) thoſe actions—I hold in as much contempt and abhorrence as yourſelf? Are you, indeed, ignorant, that Count de Villefort has detected the ſlanders, that have robbed

robbed me of all I hold dear on earth, and has invited me hither to juſtify to you my former conduct? It is ſurely impoſſible you can be uninformed of theſe circumſtances, and I am again torturing myſelf with a falſe hope!"

The ſilence of Emily confirmed this ſuppoſition; for the deep twilight would not allow Valancourt to diſtinguiſh the aſtoniſhment and doubting joy, that fixed her features. For a moment, ſhe continued unable to ſpeak; then a profound ſigh ſeemed to give ſome relief to her ſpirits, and ſhe ſaid,

"Valancourt! I was, till this moment, ignorant of all the circumſtances you have mentioned; the emotion I now ſuffer may aſſure you of the truth of this, and, that, though I had ceaſed to eſteem, I had not taught myſelf entirely to forget you."

"This moment," ſaid Valancourt, in a low voice, and leaning for ſupport againſt the window—"this moment brings with it a conviction that overpowers me!—I am

dear to you then—ſtill dear to you, my Emily!"

"Is it neceſſary that I ſhould tell you ſo?" ſhe replied, "is it neceſſary, that I ſhould ſay—theſe are the firſt moments of joy I have known, ſince your departure, and that they repay me for all thoſe of pain I have ſuffered in the interval?"

Valancourt ſighed deeply, and was unable to reply; but, as he preſſed her hand to his lips, the tears, that fell over it, ſpoke a language, which could not be miſtaken, and to which words were inadequate.

Emily, ſomewhat tranquillized, propoſed returning to the chateau, and then, for the firſt time, recollected that the Count had invited Valancourt thither to explain his conduct, and that no explanation had yet been given. But, while ſhe acknowledged this, her heart would not allow her to dwell, for a moment, on the poſſibility of his unworthineſs; his look, his voice, his manner, all ſpoke the noble ſincerity, which had

had formerly diſtinguiſhed him; and ſhe again permitted herſelf to indulge the emotions of a joy, more ſurpriſing and powerful, than ſhe had ever before experienced.

Neither Emily, or Valancourt, were conſcious how they reached the chateau, whither they might have been transferred by the ſpell of a fairy, for any thing they could remember; and it was not, till they had reached the great hall, that either of them recollected there were other perſons in the world beſides themſelves. The Count then came forth with ſurpriſe, and with the joyfulneſs of pure benevolence, to welcome Valancourt, and to entreat his forgiveneſs of the injuſtice he had done him; ſoon after which, Monſ. Bonnac joined this happy group, in which he and Valancourt were mutually rejoiced to meet.

When the firſt congratulations were over, and the general joy became ſomewhat more tranquil, the Count withdrew with Valancourt to the library, where a long converſation paſſed between them, in which the latter

latter ſo clearly juſtified himſelf of the criminal parts of the conduct, imputed to him, and ſo candidly confeſſed and ſo feelingly lamented the follies, which he had committed, that the Count was confirmed in the belief of all he had hoped; and, while he perceived ſo many noble virtues in Valancourt, and that experience had taught him to deteſt the follies, which before he had only not admired, he did not ſcruple to believe, that he would paſs through life with the dignity of a wife and good man, or to entruſt to his care the future happineſs of Emily St. Aubert, for whom he felt the ſolicitude of a parent. Of this he ſoon informed her, in a ſhort converſation, when Valancourt had left him. While Emily liſtened to a relation of the ſervices, that Valancourt had rendered Monſ. Bonnac, her eyes overflowed with tears of pleaſure, and the further converſation of Count de Villefort perfectly diſſipated every doubt, as to the paſt and future conduct of him, to whom ſhe now reſtored,

ſtored, without fear, the eſteem and affection, with which ſhe had formerly received him.

When they returned to the ſupper-room, the Counteſs and Lady Blanche met Valancourt with ſincere congratulations; and Blanche, indeed, was ſo much rejoiced to ſee Emily returned to happineſs, as to forget, for a while, that Monſ. St. Foix was not yet arrived at the chateau, though he had been expected for ſome hours; but her generous ſympathy was, ſoon after, rewarded by his appearance. He was now perfectly recovered from the wounds, received, during his perilous adventure among the Pyrenées, the mention of which ſerved to heighten to the parties, who had been involved in it, the ſenſe of their preſent happineſs. New congratulations paſſed between them, and round the ſupper-table appeared a group of faces, ſmiling with felicity, but with a felicity, which had in each a different character. The ſmile of

Blanche

Blanche was frank and gay, that of Emily tender and penſive; Valancourt's was rapturous, tender and gay alternately; Monſ. St. Foix's was joyous, and that of the Count, as he looked on the ſurrounding party, expreſſed the tempered complacency of benevolence; while the features of the Counteſs, Henri, and Monſ. Bonnac, diſcovered fainter traces of animation. Poor Monſ. Du Pont did not, by his preſence, throw a ſhade of regret over the company; for, when he had diſcovered, that Valancourt was not unworthy of the eſteem of Emily, he determined ſeriouſly to endeavour at the conqueſt of his own hopeleſs affection, and had immediately withdrawn from Chateau-le-Blanc—a conduct, which Emily now underſtood, and rewarded with her admiration and pity.

The Count and his gueſts continued together till a late hour, yielding to the delights of ſocial gaiety, and to the ſweets of friendſhip. When Annette heard of the

arrival

arrival of Valancourt, Ludovico had ſome difficulty to prevent her going into the ſupper-room, to expreſs her joy, for ſhe declared, that ſhe had never been ſo rejoiced at any *accident* as this, ſince ſhe had found Ludovico himſelf.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

"Now my taſk is ſmoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run
Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bow'd welkin low doth bend,
And, from thence, can ſoar as ſoon
To the corners of the moon."

MILTON.

THE marriages of the Lady Blanche and Emily St. Aubert were celebrated, on the ſame day, and with the ancient baronial magnificence, at Chateau-le-Blanc. The feaſts were held in the great hall of the caſtle, which, on this occaſion, was hung with ſuperb new tapeſtry, repreſenting the exploits of Charlemagne and his twelve peers; here were ſeen the Saracens, with their horrible viſors, advancing to battle; and there, were diſplayed the wild ſolem-

ſolemnities of incantation, and the necromantic feats, exhibited by the magician *Jarl* before the Emperor. The ſumptuous banners of the family of Villeroi, which had long ſlept in duſt, were once more unfurled, to wave over the gothic points of painted caſements; and muſic echoed, in many a lingering cloſe, through every winding gallery and colonnade of that vaſt edifice.

As Annette looked down from the corridor upon the hall, whoſe arches and windows were illuminated with brilliant feſtoons of lamps, and gazed on the ſplendid dreſſes of the dancers, the coſtly liveries of the attendants, the canopies of purple velvet and gold, and liſtened to the gay ſtrains that floated along the vaulted roof, ſhe almoſt fancied herſelf in an enchanted palace, and declared, that ſhe had not met with any place, which charmed her ſo much, ſince ſhe read the fairy tales; nay, that the fairies themſelves, at their nightly

nightly revels in this old hall, could diſplay nothing finer; while old Dorothée, as ſhe ſurveyed the ſcene, ſighed, and ſaid, the caſtle looked as it was wont to do in the time of her youth.

After gracing the feſtivities of Chateau-le-Blanc, for ſome days, Valancourt and Emily took leave of their kind friends, and returned to La Vallée, where the faithful Thereſa received them with unfeigned joy, and the pleaſant ſhades welcomed them with a thouſand tender and affecting remembrances; and, while they wandered together over the ſcenes, ſo long inhabited by the late Monſ. and Madame St. Aubert, and Emily pointed out, with penſive affection, their favourite haunts, her preſent happineſs was heightened, by conſidering, that it would have been worthy of their approbation, could they have witneſſed it.

Valancourt led her to the plane-tree on the terrace, where he had firſt ventured

to

to declare his love, and where now the remembrance of the anxiety he had then ſuffered, and the retroſpect of all the dangers and misfortunes they had each encountered, ſince laſt they ſat together beneath its broad branches, exalted the ſenſe of their preſent felicity, which, on this ſpot, ſacred to the memory of St. Aubert, they ſolemnly vowed to deſerve, as far as poſſible, by endeavouring to imitate his benevolence,—by remembering, that ſuperior attainments of every ſort bring with them duties of ſuperior exertion,—and, by affording to their fellow-beings, together with that portion of ordinary comforts, which proſperity always owes to misfortune, the example of lives paſſed in happy thankfulneſs to God, and, therefore, in careful tenderneſs to his creatures.

Soon after their return to La Vallée, the brother of Valancourt came to congratulate him on his marriage, and to pay his reſpects to Emily, with whom he was ſo much pleaſed, as well as with the proſpect

of rational happineſs, which theſe nuptials offered to Valancourt, that he immediately reſigned to him a part of the rich domain, the whole of which, as he had no family, would of courſe deſcend to his brother, on his deceaſe.

The eſtates, at Tholouſe, were diſpoſed of, and Emily purchaſed of Monſ. Queſnel the antient domain of her late father, where, having given Annette a marriage-portion, ſhe ſettled her as the houſekeeper, and Ludovico as the ſteward; but, ſince both Valancourt and herſelf preferred the pleaſant and long-loved ſhades of La Vallée to the magnificence of Epourville, they continued to reſide there, paſſing, however, a few months in the year at the birth-place of St. Aubert, in tender reſpect to his memory.

The legacy, which had been bequeathed to Emily by Signora Laurentini, ſhe begged Valancourt would allow her to reſign to Monſ. Bonnac; and Valancourt, when ſhe

ſhe made the requeſt, felt all the value of the compliment it conveyed. The caſtle of Udolpho, alſo, deſcended to the wife of Monſ. Bonnac, who was the neareſt ſurviving relation of the houſe of that name, and thus affluence reſtored his long oppreſſed ſpirits to peace, and his family to comfort.

O! how joyful it is to tell of happineſs, ſuch as that of Valancourt and Emily; to relate, that, after ſuffering under the oppreſſion of the vicious, and the diſdain of the weak, they were, at length, reſtored to each other—to the beloved landſcapes of their native country—to the ſecureſt felicity of this life, that of aſpiring to moral and labouring for intellectual improvement—to the pleaſures of enlightened ſociety, and to the exerciſe of the benevolence which had always animated their hearts; while the bowers of La Vallée became, once more, the retreat of goodneſs, wiſdom and domeſtic bleſſedneſs!

O! uſeful

O! useful may it be to have shewn, that, though the vicious can sometimes pour affliction upon the good, their power is transient and their punishment certain; and that innocence, though oppressed by injustice, shall, supported by patience, finally triumph over misfortune!

And, if the weak hand that has recorded this tale, has, by its scenes, beguiled the mourner of one hour of sorrow, or, by its moral, taught him to sustain it—the effort, however humble, has not been vain, nor is the writer unrewarded.

FINIS.